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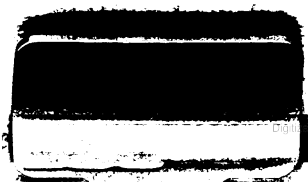
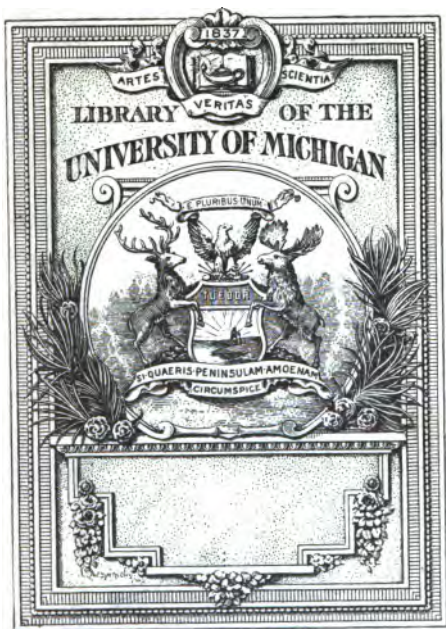
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SLAVERY

IN THE

UNITED STATES.

BY

J. K. PAULDING.

NEW-YORK:

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C. W.

slavery, as it exists in the United States, an evil of such surpassing enormity as to demand the sacrifice of the harmony and consequent union of the states, followed by civil contention and servile war, to its removal. If the question were now for the first time to be decided, whether it should be permitted to ingraft itself on the institutions of the country, he would assuredly oppose it with a zeal at least equal to that with which he is about to combat the unlawful interference of the abolitionists. But inasmuch as it is now deeply rooted in our land, and inseparably intertwined with the interests, the habits, the domestic policy, and social relations of a large portion of the people of this Union; inasmuch as it is identified with the constitutional rights, and the value of the property of millions of free citizens who will not be persuaded, and cannot be controlled; and, above all, inasmuch as the treatment it may receive must and will deeply affect their peace, safety, and happiness, he is for leaving it to the humanity and discretion of those whom alone it concerns. If it be an evil, let those who cherish bear it. It is their business, not ours, since no duty renders it obligatory on us to go crusading about the world redressing wrongs, real or imaginary, which we had no hand in inflicting. If it reflects dishonour, none of it can fall to our share, since the institution of slavery

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is guarded by constitutional barriers which cannot be overleaped or broken down, and we have done our part by abolishing it wherever it was within our jurisdiction. If it be a crime to have inherited the property of slaves ; if it be a crime to decline divesting themselves of it in a manner which all rational reflecting men believe will be equally pernicious to the master and the slave ; if it be a crime to resent, resist, or counteract by every means in their power, any interference with a subject involving all that is dear to men, then let them meet the consequences ; but let not us, their kindred, neighbours, and countrymen, become instruments to scatter the firebrands of fanaticism among them, and lend a helping hand to insurrection and massacre.

Let us not forget that in our furious zeal to give freedom to the blacks, we are laying the axe to the root of the fairest plant of freedom that adorns the New or the Old World ; that in our ardour to bring about a questionable good, we are provoking vast and alarming evils ; and that there is no precept of religion or morality more inflexible in its application than that which forbids doing evil that good may ensue. Where the evil is immediate and morally certain, on every ground of reason and experience, and the good remote, contingent, and hypothetical, it is the part of a wise and good

man to shrink from thus arrogating to himself the attributes of Omniscience, and pretending to look into futurity. When mankind are gifted with a prophetic inspiration directly derived from Heaven; or when they acquire the prerogative of planning and controlling the economy of the universe, then, and not till then, should they dare to do evil in the presumptuous anticipation that the miseries they may inflict on the living, will be repaid by the happiness of those yet unborn.

New-York, Nov. 1835.

SLAVERY.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Opposition of Slavery to the Law of God.

THE advocates of immediate, unconditional emancipation, having attempted to make it a religious question, by asserting the abstract principle, that slavery is contrary to the law of God,* it becomes necessary to subject this fundamental proposition to the test of examination. If it should be found not to be sustained by those acknowledged manifestations of his will, which are the only foundations of his law, then it would seem, the whole ground of their proceedings is untenable; since it is only by pleading the law of God, in opposition to the laws of man, that they can justify their present course. The maxim, that slavery is contrary to the law of God, and the rights of nature, has been lately revived, and sanctioned by the authority of Lord Brougham, to

* See the declaration of the "National Anti-Slavery Society."

whom we have seen it ascribed. But whatever may be our respect for his lordship's learning and abilities, we cannot recognise him as the interpreter of the Divine will. We look to a higher and far purer source : to the precepts of the Old and New Testaments, as the only authentic manifestations of the Divine law, and to them we shall appeal in the proper place.

It is presumed that none will deny the existence of slavery in every quarter of the known world, at the period when the law of God was promulgated from the judgment seat on Mount Sinai. That it was hereditary bondage, will appear from the passages that will be presently cited. It is frequently alluded to ; frequently recognised as a part of the social system of the nation to which the Scriptures were addressed, and never denounced as a crime or a curse by name or by description.

A reference to the Old Testament will show that the abolitionists can derive from it no authority to sustain their position, that slavery is contrary to the law of God. The only text they have been able to bring to bear directly upon the subject, is that which denounces the penalty of death to the "man-stealer;" while, on the contrary, slavery is made the subject of express regulation in the social institutions of the Jews, and this without a single expression of disapprobation on the part of

the Divine Lawgiver. It is evident, therefore, that the denunciation of death to the man-stealer is not applicable to those who hold slaves by capture in war, by purchase, or by inheritance. Its object was unquestionably the same with that of the law of the southern states, which inflicts a heavy punishment on those who steal or entice away slaves from their rightful owners. It was a law for the security of this species of property.

There is, however, one other passage in the Old Testament which the abolitionists have cited in support of their position, that slavery is contrary to the law of God. It is found in the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and is as follows :—

“Is not this the test that I have chosen? to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?”

One of the great sources of those differences in the interpretation of the Scriptures, which have confounded mankind, and produced endless controversies of the sword and the pen, is the custom of explaining isolated texts, without any attention to their connection with what precedes, or what follows, and without the least regard to the circumstances which gave rise to the precept.

The book of Isaiah is a prophetic vision,* having a single reference to the abuses, corruptions, and

* Isaiah is considered by commentators as the most difficult of all the prophets to comprehend.

oppressions which had crept into Israel, most especially its idolatries; and to the coming of Christ. It is thus ushered in:—

“The dream of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, and Hezekiah, kings of Israel.” It begins by detailing the backslidings of the people.

“Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves. Every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, nor doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

“The land is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, and that which their own fingers have made.”

Such are the principal evils of which he complains, and which he predicts will be cured by the mission of Christ, which all the authorities we have seen agree in saying was exclusively devoted to the reformation of ecclesiastical abuses and the corruptions of the church. The government of the Jews was in effect a hierarchy, and the abuses he enumerated may be traced in a great degree to this source. The captions of the different chapters run as follows:—

“The prophet, for the comfort of the Gentiles, prophesieth the amplitude of *the church*.”

“God’s judgments against the enemies of *the church*.”

"The judgments wherewith God revengeth *his church*"

"The prophet showeth the cursed folly of trusting to Egypt, and forsaking of God."

"Christ awakeneth *the church* with his calling."

"The glory of *the church* in the abundant success of the Gentiles."

"The fervent desire of the prophet to confirm *the church* in God's promises."

The tyranny of the church is alluded to in various passages, and this consisted in the infliction of fines, confiscations, and imprisonment. Throughout the whole book of Isaiah, we have not been able to discover but one distinct allusion to slaves, and this is a charge of exacting labour from them on fast days, which was a violation of the laws of Moses. From the whole tenour of the prophecy, it distinctly appears that the freeing of the oppressed, and the breaking of the yoke, alludes to the bonds of wickedness, and the yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny, of which our Saviour speaks in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. His words have an apt reference to the attempts of fanatical reformers, who are striving to make religion an intolerable burden, instead of a delightful and salutary duty. The Saviour says, speaking of the tyranny of the Jewish priesthood, "For they bind

heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."

The greater number of commentators coincide with the interpretation we have given, and those who differ with them, are far from going the lengths of the abolitionists. Dr. Scott, on this passage from Isaiah, says—

"They who observed such a fast would loose the bonds of those they had iniquitously enslaved and imprisoned; they would moderate the labours of their servants, and render their services and situations more comfortable. They would cease from usurious exactions, and remit the debts that either were contracted through fraud, or which the poor debtor was unable to discharge."

The prophecy of Isaiah, according to the chronology of the Bible, was delivered about seven hundred years before the birth of Christ, at which time the laws of Moses were in full force. It is therefore extremely improbable, to say the least, that the prophet would have attacked them in this unceremonious manner, as they expressly recognise slavery in various passages; not in *dreams*, but in express words, derived from the judgment seat of Heaven. We shall content ourselves with quoting the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus.

The book of Leviticus, in the words of a learned and indefatigable commentator,* “principally consists of ritual laws delivered to Moses from the mercy seat, during the first month after the tabernacle was erected; though moral precepts are frequently interspersed.” And the chapter from which our quotations are taken, is ushered in by the following sublime preamble: “And the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying—” Here, then, is a sanction which cannot be questioned by those who pretend to a belief in the authority of the Bible.

“Both thy bondmen and bondmaids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are among you. Of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids.

“Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, *which they begot in your land, and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you to inherit them by possession. They shall be your bondmen for ever.*”

Here is a direct sanction of rights corresponding in all respects with those of the holders of slaves in the United States. They were originally

* Rev. Thomas Scott.

"of the heathen" when purchased; their posterity was *"begot in our land,"* and they have descended *"as an inheritance to our children."* It is difficult to conceive how, with these authorities before them, the abolitionists can persist in maintaining that slavery is contrary to the law of God; or that the denunciation of death to the "man-stealer" has any reference whatever to the case of the holders of slaves in the United States. So to apply it, is to make the word of God a tissue of contradictions unworthy of its divine Author. If the opinions of mankind, the social duties, and social relations, have so changed since the age of the Bible, as to render what was then right now wrong, what was then sanctioned by the Supreme Being now contrary to the law of God, then neither the Old nor the New Testament can be any longer the standard of our duties to Heaven or to our fellow creatures, We must seek that standard in the declamations of the abolitionists, not in the pages of Holy Writ, But it is not, and cannot be true, that what was sanctioned by the authority of the Supreme Being in one age, can be the worst of crimes, and the worst of curses in another. It is believed that the law of God is as unchangeable as its Author.

Yet although the Divine law may remain the same in its general principles, experience has

shown that at distant periods of time, the corruptions of our nature, or it may be, the progress of knowledge and intelligence, and the various changes they produce in the state of society, as well as the relations of persons and things, render a new application of its principles necessary to the happiness of mankind. Hence we observe in the records of history, that religion as well as government has been invariably modified, not so much in fundamental principles, as in their practical application, to suit the progress of the human intellect. Savages and barbarians can have no government but one of force, and no religion but superstition. Civilized and intelligent nations must have laws for the security of property, and their religion must accord with their progress in knowledge, as well as with their civil institutions. Neither the religion or the government of enlightened nations, is fit for those which are ignorant and barbarous ; and hence it is, that all experience has hitherto exemplified the fact, that a general improvement in knowledge and civilization is indispensable to all salutary reforms in religion.

Thus the lapse of ages and the vast changes which they had produced in the state of society, the manners of nations, and the mass of their intelligence, rendered the social institutions and the code

of practical morality of the Old Testament obsolete and inapplicable. A new dispensation therefore became necessary, not to abrogate the doctrines of the Old Testament, but to modify their operation, so as to render them applicable to a new state of things, which the course of time had produced. Such a modification is the code of morals inculcated by the Saviour of mankind, who, though existing from all eternity, and predestined to this mission, was not sent on earth until the corruptions of mankind, and the revolutions of ages, had made new examples, and a revision of old precepts necessary to their regeneration. Nor can it be denied that, independently of all the interests of hereafter, the mission of Christ has had, and long will have, a most beneficial and noble influence on the morals and happiness of all those who receive and practise his precepts.

The fanatics of the present times may probably argue from the foregoing premises, that the lapse of more than eighteen hundred years since the appearance of the great Redeemer and Reformer, has rendered a revision and improvement of his system in like manner necessary to the present state of human knowledge and opinions, and that they are the chosen instruments of Heaven for bringing about a new reformation in morals, reli-

gion, and social institutions. If such be their claims, let them produce their credentials. Let them demonstrate the truth of their mission, as that of the Saviour was demonstrated. Let them heal the sick ; give sight to the blind ; raise the dead from their graves ; walk on the waves in the fury of the tempest ; offer themselves up willing sacrifices to the divinity of their faith, instead of skulking from all responsibility ; seal with their blood the sincerity of their belief, and die the death of malefactors, amid the rending of temples, the splitting of rocks, the quaking of the earth, and the uproar of a startled world. Then, perhaps, we may believe in their mission ; but until then their pretensions to inspiration are no better founded than their claims to common sense, or rational discretion.

Christianity then is a revision of the code of the Old Testament, and not a new system of laws based on contradictory principles. Let us see whether among its reforms the institution of slavery is included.

When the Christian faith was first propounded to mankind, "Slavery," says Archdeacon Paley, a determined opponent of the institution, and certainly as eminent a theologian as my Lord Brougham—"was a part of the civil constitution of most

countries when Christianity appeared ; *yet no passage is found in the Christian Scriptures by which it is condemned or prohibited.* This is true, for Christianity, soliciting admittance into all nations of the world, abstained, as behooved it, from meddling with the civil institutions of any. But does it follow, from the silence of the Scriptures concerning them, that all civil institutions which then prevailed were right ? or that the bad should not be exchanged for a better ?”

This admission of a learned and eminent divine, whose work on moral philosophy has always been held in high estimation, goes to substantiate the position, that there is no authority derivable from the New Testament, which justifies the assertion that slavery is contrary to the law of God ; and let it be borne in mind, that the reason which Dr. Paley adduces for the omission to denounce it, is not the authority of the Saviour or his apostles, but an inference of their interpreter. There is no Scripture warrant for it whatever ; and it might be asked, on what ground the doctor presumed to explain the motives for such uniform abstinence from all expression of hostility, or even disapprobation, towards an institution which the abolitionists call “ the greatest curse that ever fell on the heads of mankind.” The success of the Christian religion did not depend on men or human means,

but on the will of the Supreme Being. It was absolutely certain to the extent of that will. Yet, according to Dr. Paley, his only Son, coming charged with his mission, clothed with his authority, partaking in his very being and identity, did not dare to denounce "the greatest curse that ever fell upon the heads of mankind," lest it should endanger the success of that mission. He temporized with it; he left it to continue almost two thousand years, and suffered it to spread over a new world, under an impression that the Almighty power might be too weak to bring about the Almighty will. It would seem that such deductions from the silence of the New Testament are equally unworthy the mission of the Saviour as the omnipotence of God.

Again. Dr. Paley, whose authority is unquestionable when he states facts derived from his actual knowledge, holds the following language, in his chapter "On Civil Obedience as stated in the Scriptures." He says—

"We affirm, that as to all our civil rights and obligations, Christianity hath left us where she found us; that she hath neither altered nor ascertained them. The New Testament contains not one passage which, fairly interpreted, affords either argument or objection applicable to any conclu-

sions on the subject, that are deducible from the law and religion of nature."

Until these positions are controverted, there appears no necessity to prosecute this portion of the inquiry any further. It is sufficient for our present purpose, that the New Testament contains a complete moral code, exemplified by precepts applicable to every circumstance and situation of life ; that slavery existed almost universally at, and ages before the Christian dispensation, and that it is not even discountenanced there, much less denounced as contrary to the law of God. It was a civil institution ; and, as Dr. Paley truly affirms on this point, "Christianity hath left us where she found us." It is difficult to account for this omission to denounce what is now denominated "the greatest curse that ever fell upon the heads of mankind," except on the ground that, as it existed, at that period at least, it was not considered a crime to hold slaves in bondage, or that the attempt to arrest it would then, as now, produce far greater evils than the crime itself. It seems degrading to the wisdom and omnipotence of the Supreme Being, to ascribe it to an apprehension that to denounce it would embarrass the progress of that religion of which he was the Author. Neither does it appear at all probable, that the Saviour of mankind and his disciples would have shrunk

from the consequences of such a denunciation. The former knew full well that he was at all events destined as a sacrifice for the transgression of our first parents; and the latter, with scarcely an exception, sealed with their blood, as well the divinity of their religion, as the sincerity of their belief. But, admitting the deduction of Dr. Paley to be just—which, however, is not meant to be done here—that this silence was prudential on the part of the Saviour, does it not seem the height of impious presumption in mortals to meddle with a subject from which he scrupulously abstained? The rash interference of the abolitionists, as will be demonstrated hereafter, is as directly at war with the civil institutions of a portion of the United States, as it would have been on the part of the propounders of the Christian faith with those of the Roman empire, and places equal obstacles in the way of the progress of Christianity among one portion at least of mankind. It already operates as a bar to its propagation among the slaves of the South, and if persisted in, will leave the master no other refuge than that of perpetuating their ignorance.

The history of mankind exhibits almost innumerable examples of the mischievous consequences resulting from the interference of the church with

the civil rights and institutions of states. It has always ended in despotism. The laws of the United States guaranty the freedom of worship and opinion to all denominations of believers ; and it would seem the least they can do, is to refrain from all interference with them, unless in matters exclusively relating to their rights as rational beings to adopt what faith they please. True religion equally disdains to war against the established rights of property, and the personal safety of citizens. It is the auxiliary, not the dictator of the laws, and always acts in harmonious co-operation with the social institutions. It claims no right to transgress the bounds of perfect freedom in the exercise of its own opinions ; and never, unless in the fury of fanatical excitement, attempts by violence to impose them on others. When it steps out of its sacred sphere, to dictate to the powers of the state, or decide on the obligations of the people to obey or disobey the laws—when it erects itself into an arbiter to designate what statutes are in accordance, and what in conflict with the will of God, it departs from the example of its Founder, violates his precepts, and becomes the common disturber of the peace of mankind.

But it has been urged on the other hand, that

although slavery may be thus sanctioned as a part of the civil constitution of the ancient nations of the world by particular ordinances of Scripture, yet is it directly at war with the spirit of Christianity. It is said that it conflicts with its mild, beneficent code of moral duties, and therefore must be contrary to its spirit and intention. In short, that it cannot be reconciled with the great precept in which the Saviour of mankind imbodyed the sum total of all the duties which mankind owe to each other, and which he declared comprehended all the law and the prophets in relation to that subject: namely, that we should love our neighbour as ourselves.

If this be true, then the authority of the Apostle Paul is at variance with the precept of his Divine Master. The most eloquent, efficient, and indefatigable advocate of Christianity that ever adorned the world; he who did more than any human being that ever lived to spread the Gospel through distant lands; he who most happily associated the principles of religion with the precepts of morality; he who of all the apostles was thought worthy of being converted by a miracle, erects himself in opposition to the spirit of that faith which he is advocating with a zeal and ability never equalled by mortal man. He says in the sixth

chapter of his epistle to the Ephesians, where he embodies a short compendium of the duties of husbands, wives, children, and servants :—

“ Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart as to Christ. Not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good-will doing service as to the Lord and not to men : knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord whether he be bond or free. And ye masters do the same thing, forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master also is in heaven ; neither is there respect of persons with him.”

The learned commentator just quoted admits that “ the servants at that time were slaves, the property of their masters,” and attempts to account for the sanction thus given to the institution of slavery, by observing that “ the apostles were ministers of religion, not politicians ; they had not that influence among rulers and legislators which would have been requisite for the abolition of slavery.”* The explanation does not appear satisfactory. They came clothed with the inspiration and authority of God ; they attacked and overthrew systems of religion founded on the belief of ages ;

* Dr. Thomas Scott.

they warred with all the powers of superstition and error, and with all the settled prejudices of mankind. Surely, then, they would scarcely refrain from denouncing what is now denominated "the greatest curse that ever fell on the heads of mankind," simply because "they had not that influence among rulers and legislators which would have been requisite for the abolition of slavery," and were "ministers of religion, not politicians."

Yet admitting this to be the true solution, it might be asked whether this cautious delicacy towards the civil institutions of nations at that time, on the part of the apostles, does not furnish an apt and important lesson to the present fiery advocates of immediate emancipation? Are they more eloquent than the chosen disciples selected by the Saviour of mankind as his instruments for propagating the truths of Christianity? Are Garrison, and Thomson, and their followers inspired? Can they perform miracles? Can they plead the direct authority of the Son of God for their mission? Or have they the gift of any other tongue than calumny and defamation? Yet are they not doing in this country precisely what the apostles refrained from, according to Dr. Scott, and indeed all the opponents of slavery, solely on account of their want of influence with rulers and legislators? Are they not becoming "politicians," meddling with

our civil institutions, denouncing our laws, and trampling the constitution under foot? Are their morals more pure, is their religion more sublime, their mission more authentic, their eloquence more touching and beautiful, or their zeal more devout than that of the companions of the Son of the living God, that they should thus "rush in where angels dare not tread?"

But let us test this argument, and inquire into the true intent and meaning of the great command—to love our neighbour as ourselves. It could not be intended to include all mankind, else the word neighbour would not have been used on this occasion. That phrase in our own, and it is believed, all other languages, means, when applied individually, only such as from proximity of situation are so placed as to be within the reach of a frequent interchange of those acts of kindness, comfort, and assistance which distance entirely precludes. It may rationally perhaps be extended to all those living under the same system of government, and constituting one nation or body politic, and whose interests are therefore in some degree mutually dependent on each other. It does not mean universal philanthropy any further than a general good-will to all our fellow-creatures. It would be absurd to pretend to love as ourselves those we do not know, and with whom we interchange no

benefits whatever. The word neighbour, as used on this occasion, comprehends most, if not all those relations which are comprised in the word friend.

In the present case, then, who is our neighbour, the white citizen of the United States, or the black slave? It will in the sequel be attempted to be demonstrated, that the success of the abolitionists must cause immediate and most serious evils to the former, and that its consequences to the latter will, according to all experience, be scarcely less pernicious. But admitting the slaves may be ultimately benefited, still it can be only at the cost of most aggravated evils to the white people of the South. In applying then the great precept of the Saviour to the blacks alone, and considering them as our neighbours to the entire exclusion of the whites, we place the latter in the relation of stranger and alien; we cast them out of the pale of human nature, and make them the victims of our one-sided philanthropy. In attempting to do good to one colour, we inflict incalculable evils on the other. It may be asked, whether there is any moral or religious obligation to sacrifice the interests, and endanger the safety of our countrymen, neighbours, and friends, to the dangerous experiment of universal emancipation?

The mischiefs to be apprehended from such a measure are not alone the result of idle, interested,

or pretended fears. They are the direct consequences of rational experience, and philosophical deductions from the nature of man and the nature of things. Let us once more refer to the authority of Archdeacon Paley, a clergyman, a distinguished moral writer, and a steady, determined opponent of the institution of slavery.

“The discharging of slaves from all obligation to obey their masters, *which is the consequence of pronouncing slavery to be unlawful*, would have had no other effect than to let loose one half mankind upon the other. * * * The most calamitous of all contests, a *bellum servile*, might probably have ensued, to the reproach, if not the extinction of the Christian name.”

Thus then it appears on the authority of an opponent of slavery, that the declaration of the abolitionists, that slavery is contrary to the law of God, by absolving slaves from all obligation to obey their masters, would have no better effect than to let loose one half of mankind on the other, and produce the most calamitous of all contests, a servile war. What a practical commentary on the proceedings of the immediate abolitionists, and on the great injunction of the Saviour, to love our neighbour as ourselves; or that other great precept, to do unto others as we would they should do unto us! In regard to the obligation imposed

upon mankind by both these Divine precepts, it can only be practically applied in a limited sense. It might, and does very often happen, that we wish our neighbour to do something utterly unreasonable, unlawful, or morally wrong ; and in that case no one can for a moment believe he is under any obligation to comply. To love our neighbour as ourselves, and to do as we would be done by, means nothing more than a reciprocity of good offices consonant to reason ; to the great duties of justice and benevolence, as well as the laws of the land.

It would seem then from these authorities and the arguments deduced from them, that the advocates of immediate abolition can derive no warrant either from the law or the prophets for pronouncing the institution of slavery contrary to the law of God ; but that on the contrary, it is expressly recognised in the Old and in the New Testaments. Neither is it respectful to the Divine Author of all true religion, to presume that he would give his direct sanction to what was incompatible with the general spirit of his laws. When he expressly declares his will, that must be the law ; nor can it be invalidated by any ingenious conclusions from general principles supposed to be deducible from the whole system. This is making man, not God, the umpire.

It is not meant to affirm, that this Scriptural sanction of slavery furnishes conclusive evidence, that what at the period of promulgating the oracles of God was in accordance with the state of society, the acknowledged rights of man as then understood, and the public opinion, may not be modified or abolished, in consequence of the changes which time and the vicissitudes of human feeling and opinion have produced. All that is intended here, is to assert and prove that what is expressly sanctioned by the authority of the Supreme Being, cannot be a violation of his law. Nor does the position necessarily imply a continuance of the institution of slavery, which may still be abolished on grounds of humanity, expediency, or necessity, by or with the consent of those who are most deeply concerned. A denial that slavery is contrary to the law of God does not render it imperative upon us to perpetuate it, any more than a denial of the divine right of kings implies a direct obligation to overturn all monarchies. In either case, the parties holding slaves, and the subjects living under kings, have an undoubted right to judge for themselves. Their submission to the laws of man does not imply a violation of the law of God. They may therefore lawfully choose without transgressing either one or the other.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Opposition of Slavery to the Law and the Rights of Nature, as asserted by the Advocates of immediate Emancipation.

By the law of nature, as here applicable, is understood certain principles and rights which exist anterior to all the laws and institutions of the social state, and cannot be abrogated by subsequent legislation. Such is the right of self-defence, for instance, which cannot be alienated. There are other natural rights which may be voluntarily relinquished; and there are still others which may be forfeited. Such is that of personal freedom, which may be lost by captivity in war, by crime, and by debt.

Hence, though in the language of our Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal," still they may forfeit that equality by either of the causes above specified. The right of war to take the persons of armed enemies, and so dispose of

them as that their hostility shall become harmless, at least during the continuance of strife, or until they are exchanged, is practised upon by all Christian nations; is established not only on the immutable basis of reason, but the natural right of self-defence. Among civilized nations possessing the means of securing their prisoners, and of maintaining them without inflicting personal labour, until they are exchanged for mutual convenience, a temporary loss of liberty only is the result of capture in war. But it is far otherwise with savage and barbarous nations, who have neither jails nor forts, nor dungeons nor prison-ships, in which to secure their prisoners; who have no superfluities wherewith to feed, and who are unacquainted with the humane expedient of exchanging them. When they capture more than they require for their own purposes, they must either let them go, sell them to others, or put them to death. Hence Aristotle maintains that slavery must and always will exist, so long as there are barbarous nations in the world.

It is an expedient of humanity and interest combined. It is based on the principle, that life is dearer than liberty to the great majority of mankind. It is a step in the progress of civilization, by substituting service, or sale, for the massacre of



prisoners of war. Among the Indians of North America, the most savage race with which we are acquainted, prisoners were only made, for the purpose of supplying the places of those of their own tribe killed in battle, or to be tortured at the stake, for the gratification of the most malignant feelings of revenge. The early battles with them were massacres, and war extermination. When, in process of time, it became known to the savages that the French governors of Canada would purchase their white captives, they began to find it to their interest to preserve them ; since, while they ridded themselves thus of their enemies, they at the same time converted them into sources of profit. Indiscriminate massacres, and tortures at the stake now became more rare, and were not resumed until a false spirit of philanthropy forbade the purchase of captives in war. A few instances also occur in our own history, of selling Indian prisoners to the planters of the West Indies, and the memory of our forefathers has been unjustly assailed on that account. But what could they do with them ? They could not exchange them with their barbarous enemies ; they were always deficient in the superfluities of life themselves ; they had no means of securing their Indian captives, or of making them useful ; and if they let them loose again, it

was only to expose themselves anew to their depredations and murders.

It has been asserted, of late years, by writers so zealous in the cause of emancipation, that they sometimes conflict with all previous authorities, that the custom of buying captives on the coast of Africa operates as a provocative to perpetual wars, and thus increases the evil it affects to alleviate. It may be that this is the case in some degree. But a reference to the travels of Mungo Park will show that the purchase of slaves by Europeans can have little influence on the wars in the interior of that continent. The state of slavery exists there entirely independent of the foreign slave trade, and to an extent beyond any other portion of the globe.

“ A state of subordination, and certain inequalities of rank and condition, are inevitable in every stage of civil society ; but when this subordination is carried to so great a length, that the persons and services of one part of the community are entirely at the disposal of another part, it may then be denominated a state of slavery ; *and in this condition of life, a great body of the negro inhabitants of Africa have continued from the most early period of their history, with this aggravation, that their children are born to no other inheritance.*”*

* See Park's Travels, p. 210. New-York edition.

"The slaves of Africa, I suppose, are nearly in the proportion of three to one of freemen."^{*}

"Hired servants, by which I mean persons of free condition, voluntarily working for pay, are unknown in Africa."[†]

If, then, the certainty of being able to convert prisoners into a source of profit, is an incentive to war, the negroes of Africa have that incentive in the highest degree, independent of the foreign slave trade, which only carries off that surplus of captives which would otherwise probably be put to death.

In a subsequent chapter of this inquiry, it is proposed to institute a comparison between the situation of the slaves of Africa, and those of the United States, for the purpose of showing what they sacrifice and what they gain by being transferred from one country to the other. In one, they are the slaves of a race of unfeeling barbarians, equally destitute of the arts of civilized life, as of the principles of civilized government, and the doctrines of true religion. According to Park, they are perpetually engaged in wars of capture and extermination. Their systems of government, their manners, habits, and social relations, are those of uncivilized barbarians. Those who were transported hither were

^{*} Park's Travels.

[†] *Ibid.*

captives in war ; they possessed no civil rights at home ; they brought none with them, and acquired none here. They came as alien bondmen ; they were "of the heathen ;" their posterity were "begot in our land," and have become "our possession," as "inheritances of our children," in accordance with the sanction of Holy Writ, as conveyed in the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus. The government of the United States, its institutions, and its privileges, belong of right wholly and exclusively to the white men ; for they were purchased, not by the blood of the negroes, but by that of our fathers.

The declaration "that all men are created equal" is thus carried out in its consequences. It follows "that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Unquestionably, it may be said that all men are born equal, and born free, and yet may forfeit that freedom. To deny this, is to impeach the right of self-defence, which justifies the necessity of putting captives in war beyond the reach of doing us further injury, as well as those laws which inflict imprisonment and hard labour, frequently for life, on persons guilty of great crimes, and thus bring us back to the bloody code of England, or

leave us at the mercy of villains. All men have also a natural right to live as long as they can; yet it does not follow that they cannot be deprived of life, as a punishment, or to secure the safety of society. So also all men have a right to pursue their own happiness, so long as this is done without illegally or immorally interfering with the happiness of others. To interpret this celebrated declaration in any other manner, would be to pervert its principles into a warrant for the violation of all human statutes, under the sanction of the inalienable rights of nature. It was not an elaborate metaphysical discussion of human rights, but a mere assertion of great general principles; and to have enumerated all the exceptions would have been giving the world a volume in folio, instead of a simple declaration of rights. The charge of inconsistency between our principles and practice, is therefore entirely unfounded.

But to return to the point in discussion. The original progenitors of the slaves in the United States, it will be admitted, although it cannot be proved, were born free in their own country, in so far as that actual bondage might not have been inflicted on them at the moment of their birth. But they were not so when they became captives in war and were sold in a foreign country.

They did not come within the scope and meaning of the declaration of independence, which asserts the principle "that all men are created equal," for they had forfeited the right to freedom before they set foot on our soil. The slaves of the United States have never been considered as included in any general declaration or constitutional provision, except when expressly designated. They are neither comprehended in the phrase "man," nor "citizen," and constitute exceptions under the general denomination of "*all other persons.*"

The retaining of persons in bondage as captives in war, or selling them, by barbarous nations, who have no other means of rendering them incapable in future of endangering their property and lives, is, if the preceding reasoning be correct, in strict accordance with the right of self-defence, which is the first law of nature. If it should be clearly proved in a succeeding chapter of this inquiry, that the immediate emancipation of the slaves of the southern and southwestern states, will be destructive to the property, fatal to the peace, and dangerous to the lives of the whole white population of that extensive and fertile region, then most undoubtedly, upon the same principle of self-defence, they have a right to keep the posterity of the slaves purchased under such cir-

circumstances in bondage until they can be emancipated without danger to themselves.

The obligation to emancipate the slaves of that portion of the United States may be tested by another great principle. It is presumed no one will deny, that nothing can be right which is not conformable to the will of the Supreme Being, and that the only certain mode of ascertaining that will, in the government of our own conduct, other than by his express declarations, is to inquire into the tendency of an action to promote or diminish the happiness of those on whom it will operate. This definition of a good action as promoting, and a bad one as detracting from the general happiness, must and can only apply to its operation within that sphere which is usually appropriated to the action of individuals, in whatever station they may be placed. To apply it to all mankind, is to set a task which no human intellect can accomplish. A good motive merely does not, in itself, constitute a good action. It must be salutary in its consequences ; it must add to the happiness of somebody. If it injures our neighbour, the community in which we live, the nation of which we constitute a portion, or the great interests of mankind in whose nature we partake, it can by no means be construed into a good action, whatever may be the

motive. None but the Being who sees into all hearts, can detect the hidden springs of human action; his creatures can only judge of motives by the acts themselves.

To apply these principles. Would adopting and bringing into active operation the doctrine, that slavery by inheritance is contrary to the law and rights of nature, contribute to the general happiness of the only two parties concerned in this inquiry, the master and the slave of the United States, meaning those at this moment in existence, and not their posterity ten or a hundred generations hence? The advocates of immediate abolition must accept this limitation on their own principle, since if they denounce the lawfulness of sacrificing posterity for the misfortune of the parent, they must also admit the unlawfulness of sacrificing the parent for the benefit of his posterity.

Let it be supposed, for a moment, that the owners of slaves throughout the whole of the United States should promptly, and with one accord, yield obedience to this new law of nature, and at once free all their slaves, without exception; the old who are past all labour, and the young not yet arrived at an age to maintain themselves. A consideration of the probable, nay inevitable, consequences of such a procedure will enable us to test

it by the great principle adopted by moral writers, to wit, that an action is good or bad in proportion as it increases or diminishes the happiness of those within the sphere of its actual influence. At first view, this definition may seem to sanction the doctrine, that it is lawful to do evil in order to produce good ; to rob a man who makes an ill use of his money, that we may apply it to a better ; to murder a miser because he has a virtuous heir who will convert his property to purposes of benevolence ; or to sacrifice our country for the general benefit of the world. These are not, however, legitimate deductions. Such acts cannot, and will not come to good. A just Providence hath decreed that human happiness can never spring from the polluted source of human crimes.

CHAPTER III.

Of Emancipation and its Consequences, admitting its practicability.

THE emancipation of the slaves of the United States can only proceed from three causes. It must be the voluntary, or involuntary act of their owners, or the work of the slaves themselves. In the first case, it will result from a sense of duty or a conviction of its expediency; in the second, from coercive legislation; in the third, from conspiracy, insurrection, and servile war.

Is it within the widest limits of a rational probability, that millions of men, constituting entire independent states, so far as respects this question, will be wrought upon by such a course of false and irritating calumnies as the abolitionists are daily bringing to bear upon them, voluntarily, and all at once to divest themselves of a large portion of their property, and that which gives value to all the rest, on the ground of an abstract principle,

which they never acknowledged? Does the history of mankind present a single instance of such a miracle being worked by such means and such instruments? There is no such example, nor will there ever be until human nature undergoes a radical and complete revolution.

The emancipation of the slaves in the middle states was gradual and progressive; they possessed comparatively few, and their services were not indispensably necessary to domestic offices, or the cultivation of the land. The sacrifice was nothing compared with that demanded of the southern states. It was tacitly assented to, simply because it was not thought worth while to organize an opposition. Few possessed slaves; and these few were overawed by the many. By the former it was submitted to, rather than approved.

It is believed that slavery has been abolished in one, perhaps more, of the states of South America. But this was a revolutionary act. A very large portion of the owners of slaves were of the class which opposed the establishment of independence, whose persons were exiled and outlawed, whose lives forfeited, and whose property was confiscated. The sacrifice was demanded of the enemies of the state, of proscribed exiles, not fellow-citizens and

brothers. It was an act of policy or vengeance rather than of humanity.

The late conduct of the British authorities in relation to the slaves of the colonies, which is held up by themselves and their followers in this country as an object of imitation, belongs to that species of philanthropy which is exercised solely at the expense of others. The people of England gave away nothing ; they merely submitted to a small addition to a debt which will never be paid. The government of England gave nothing but the money of the people, of which it has never been at all chary. Neither Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Buxton, nor, in all probability, a single one of the noble lords and honourable gentlemen who voted for emancipating the slaves of the British colonies, sacrificed a single comfort or luxury at the shrine of philanthropy ; and as to Mr. O'Connell, we have not heard that he relinquished a penny of the "tribute of gratitude," amounting to some 20,000*l.* sterling a year, paid by his suffering but generous countrymen to keep his patriotism from falling a victim to ministerial seduction, as that of so many Irish "liberators" has done before him. It has been hinted to us by persons well acquainted with the state of parties in England, that the members of parliament constituting what is called the "*evan-*

gelicals," hold the balance of power between the "reformers" and "conservatives," and hence probably arises the zeal of the liberator in behalf of the slaves of the United States, who are the favourite, if not exclusive objects of evangelical philanthropy. It is also whispered that the piety as well as humanity of more than one of the most stanch ministerial advocates of universal emancipation, is somewhat political. In such a contest, the great struggle generally is which party shall make the most noise, and all experience demonstrates that the victory is nine times in ten achieved by that which is least sincere.

Be this as it may, on pretence of establishing the rights of one colour, the government of England infringed grossly upon the established rights of another, and committed a robbery under cover of humanity. It outraged its own laws and constitution by an invasion of property guaranteed by both, and attempted to cheat the world of its admiration, by an unwarrantable exercise of power over those who were unable to resist. To cover its injustice, it only robbed them of two thirds of their property, and paid for the remainder according to its own estimate, without consulting those whom it plundered under the

benignest auspices of philanthropy. The act has no affinity with benevolence, because it is founded in gross injustice, and is equally devoid of disinterestedness as magnanimity, since it was performed at the expense of the colonies, in fact, and was a triumph over weakness. It is still, however, liable to the reproaches of the abolitionists, for it falls far short of their own avowed principles. It was not instantaneous, but prospective emancipation; nor did it apparently contemplate amalgamation, as one of its direct and immediate consequences.

No citizen of the United States ought ever to wish to see such one-sided philanthropy as this practised here, even if it were practicable. But it is not practicable. The southern states are not colonies, but in this respect sovereign and independent. There exists no constitutional right to justify such an invasion of property, and no power to enforce it. Happily, our government is strictly circumscribed within the limits of a written constitution. It is incapable, from its very nature, of violence and usurpation, and can act only in virtue of the majesty of the laws. Within that sphere, it is the strongest under the sun; without that sphere, the weakest. The attempt to apply coercive legislation, in the very teeth of the constitution, would inevitably produce resistance,

civil commotion, and eventually, or directly, a separation of the Union. Would it then come under the definition of a good action? Would it promote the general happiness? The answer will be found in the details of its inevitable consequences.

All who are in the least acquainted with the universal feeling of the South, and who see the manner in which it meets every demonstration to interfere with this portion of its domestic policy, must know that such attempts will be resisted at all hazards. To the people of the South, this is no subject to be played at football with at pleasure; no theme for abstract declamation. It may be sport to us, but it is death to them. It is a question involving their feelings and their reputation; their domestic quiet; the peace of their household; their property, their safety, and that of their wives and children. It is a question, whether or not it is the right and the duty of the slave to rise and cut the throats of his master and family. Can it then be wondered at, or are the free citizens of the South to be reproached and denounced, if they receive such demonstrations with indignant impatience, and demand of the sister states that the incendiaries, who promulgate these doctrines, shall be checked in their career?

It may be, that the feelings of the South have been in some measure aggravated by political excitements; that there are men who use the slave question as a political stalking horse, with a view either to attain an influence in the general government, or failing in this, facilitating a separation of the Union, that they may rule over some one of the fragments. It is also possible there may be political leaders in another quarter who tolerate, if they do not encourage, the seeds of disunion, which by ultimately separating the South from the North, will restore their ancient supremacy in the confederation. All this may be true. Yet, independently of these causes, it must be obvious to all calm observers, that there is a common interest operating intensely in the southern states, which ever has, and ever will, produce a common feeling on this momentous subject. Touch it with a rude hand, and as sure as there is a sun in the heavens, they will "start madly from their spheres," and for ever alienate themselves from a union, which instead of protecting, assails their rights, in a manner equally injurious to their property, and insulting to their feelings. They will not argue the question—they will act, and promptly too, as men act in defence of all that is dear to men.

If these premises are well founded, as no one

can deny who has noticed the course of events; then there is no rational ground for believing, that immediate emancipation, either by a voluntary act, or by means of coercive legislation, will either now, or at any future period, result from the proceedings of the abolitionists. It remains, then, to inquire into the practicability of the slaves achieving it, by conspiracy, by insurrection, or servile war; by secret murder, or open resistance.

It is not among the least revolting consequences of the proceedings of the abolitionists, that they involve the necessity of inquiring into a subject so fraught with everything that can render it aggravating to the feelings of humanity. That the slaves may, at some not very distant period of time, be excited by the goadings of the abolitionists to the most desperate atrocities, is more than sufficiently probable: but that they will succeed in attaining their freedom by force, is beyond the reach of all rational anticipation. It is scarcely possible that a general conspiracy throughout all, or in any one of the southern states, could be formed and brought to maturity without discovery. It is scarcely possible, that if it were, any considerable number of them could provide themselves with arms; or that if they did, they could assemble in sufficient force to cope with their masters.

They might consume their houses, desolate their fields, lay waste the country in various sections, and sacrifice by midnight assassinations hundreds of innocent women and children, as at the late insurrection in Lower Virginia, but they could go no farther. The white men would soon assemble, and the sense of inferiority, which makes every slave a coward in the presence of his master, would come in aid of his superiority in all other respects. Not only this, but if it were necessary, it is confidently believed, there is not a citizen of any state of this Union, who is worthy of the name, that would not rush to the rescue of his brethren in the South. The most terrible retribution would be exacted of the incendiaries and murderers. No abstract dogma would protect them from utter annihilation. There would be no safety but in destroying them. The race of the black, like that of the red men, who once hunted within our borders, would become extinct, and modern philanthropy be compelled to seek new victims.

But let it be supposed, however horrible the idea, that the wishes of the friends of the "entire human race" were fulfilled: let us imagine a community of free blacks rising among the ruins of states, lords of the soil, smoking with the habitations and blood of their exterminated masters and

families. Would the sum of human happiness be increased by such a result? Would the pangs of murdered white men, women, and infants; the agonies of the exiled and impoverished survivors, and the destruction of all the landmarks of social improvement, be replaced by the refreshing spectacle of an enlightened, industrious, and happy nation of blacks, living in the enjoyment of rational freedom, sharing the comforts of salutary labour, and the high gratifications of moral and intellectual improvement? Look at the following picture of the island of Jamaica, as it presents itself at this moment.

“Every day the negroes are becoming more licentious and corrupt. Singing psalms at the chapels is made an excuse and a cloak by the apprentices for laziness. They do not many of them work over two hours a day. The streets of Kingston, once famed for their orderly quiet, are now nightly the scenes of drunken debauchery, negro drumming, and dancing, much of it under the mask of preaching and singing at the evening conventicles. Jamaica promises soon to become as pestiferous a sink of vice and corruption as the most libertine enthusiast can desire.”

Look, too, at St. Domingo, where the early fruits of an emancipation, purchased by the poverty, exile,

and blood of tens of thousands of civilized white men, are exemplified in the decay and approaching ruin of that island, one of the most fruitful in the world; in the infliction of a code of laws, prescribing a certain number of stripes in order to overcome the innate lazy apathy which forms a part of the very constitution of the African race; and in a general system of despotism far more severe than they suffered under their ancient masters. Look, too, at the nations of Africa, in their own native land, destitute of everything that gives real value to liberty, and three-fourths of them subjected to hereditary bondage.

The experience of the people of the South, also, furnishes ample evidence of the evil consequences of the emancipation of their slaves, insomuch that necessity has obliged their legislative bodies to make it a condition of their freedom, that they shall depart from the state. Otherwise, they for the most part become the keepers of what are called flash-houses, where the slaves are furnished with liquor, in defiance of the laws; encouraged to thefts and depredations on the property of the master, by finding purchasers close at hand; initiated into all sorts of debaucheries; and finally tempted to run away, either by the fear of discovery and punish-

ment, or the hope of securing a permanency in these pernicious indulgences.

If these examples are insufficient to repress the towering anticipations of the friends of the "entire human race," let us look at home, and draw conclusions from our own daily observation. Let us consult our own eyes and ears, and while sickening with disappointment at the result of all the efforts even of sober rational philanthropy, in seeing the laziness, the dirt, the debauchery, and the crimes of the free blacks of our city, ask of ourselves, if the massacre, and exile, and ruin of such a noble race as that of the South, and the substitution of one composed of such ingredients, will increase or diminish the sum of human happiness?

Such a community could not last long. Even at this moment a large portion of the free blacks would be perishing amid the frosts of winter, like grasshoppers which have wasted their summer in idleness, were it not for the industrious white men, who, like ants, have provided their wintry store, and whose charities keep them alive. Without doubt the most speedy mode of ridding our country of these firebrands of contention, would be the success of the advocates of immediate emancipation, in achieving their freedom. But it would be a cruel and inhuman expedient; for, judging by

what has been already seen, few years would elapse before their indolence, their want of prudence, their utter carelessness of the future, together with the corruptions engendered by the possession of a freedom they know not how to enjoy, would consume them like wasting cankers, and strew the country with sad monuments of a wild, wilful, unrelenting, remorseless philanthropy, which, shutting its eyes, like the drunken soldier, rushes headlong up to the muzzle of the loaded cannon. Again, it may be asked, would such an act, followed by such consequences, be conformable to the laws of God and nature, which have for their basis the general happiness of mankind?

CHAPTER IV.

Of Amalgamation, and a Community of Social and Political Rights.

THE advocates of immediate emancipation, aware of the consequences sketched in the preceding chapter, have sought to obviate them by recommending amalgamation ; that is, indiscriminate marriages, between the whites and blacks, accompanied of course by a communion of social and civil rights, as a remedy for all the evils which must necessarily result from the adoption of their first principle. The remedy is rather worse than the disease.

The project of intermarrying with the blacks, is a project for debasing the whites by a mixture of that blood, which, wherever it flows, carries with it the seeds of deterioration. It is a scheme for lowering the standard of our nature, by approximating the highest grade of human beings to the lowest, and is equivalent to enhancing the happiness of mankind by a process of debasement.

That the negro should relish the idea of thus improving his breed at the expense of the white race is quite natural ; that there should be found among the latter, men who recommend and enforce such a plan, even from the pulpit, appears somewhat remarkable, as an example of extraordinary disinterestedness. But that there should be white women, well educated and respectable females, supporting it by their money and their influence, their presence and co-operation ; apparently willing, nay, anxious to barter their superiority for the badges of degradation ; to become the mothers of mulattoes ; voluntarily to entail upon their posterity a curse that seems coeval with the first existence of the negro, and cast away a portion of the divinity within them at the shrine of a mere abstract dogma, is one of the wonders which fanaticism alone can achieve.

That there are such men, and—shame on the sex—such women, is but too evident. But they are exceptions to the rest of their class, to the race to which they belong. They are traitors to the whiteskin, influenced by madbrained fanaticism, or the victims of licentious and ungovernable passions, perverted into an unnatural taste by their own indulgence. The proposition has been everywhere received with indignant scorn.

Throughout the whole United States, with the single exception of little knots of raving fanatics in a few towns and villages, one chorus of disgust and abhorrence has met the odious project. In a country hitherto the most exemplary of any in the world for obedience to the laws, assemblages, not of idle and ignorant profligates, but of respectable citizens, have, in the absence of all statutes for repressing such outrageous attacks on the feelings of society and the established decorum of life, taken the law into their own hands, and dispersed or punished these aggressions. Nay, even the peaceable and orderly people of New-England, celebrated for their cool self-possession, their habitual devotion to the peace and harmony of society, have everywhere risen against the monstrous indignity, and infringed upon the laws of the land, in vindication of the purity of their blood. The universal sentiment of our race stands arrayed against the disgraceful alliance ; and whether it be natural instinct, inspired reason, or long established prejudice, there exist no indications among us, to induce a belief that it will ever be eradicated from the hearts of the white people of the United States.

But, admitting it could, it is denied that such a consummation would be desirable, not only for the

reasons just presented, but on the ground of other deep considerations. Such a mixture would at once destroy the homogeneous character of the people of the United States, on which is founded our union, and from which results nearly all those ties which constitute the cement of social life. A mongrel race would arise, of all shades and colours, each claiming under the new order of things equal social and civil rights, yet all enjoying real substantial consideration in proportion to the whiteness of their skin, and the absence of those indelible characteristics which mark the African race. It could never become the climax of dignity to wear the black skin. The law of the land might declare it equal to the white, and confer on it equal social and political rights; but the law of nature, or what is equivalent to it in this inquiry, the long habits, and feelings, and thinking, and acting, which have descended from generation to generation, and become a part of our being, would declare against it with a force that nothing could resist. Instead of two factions, we should have a dozen, arrayed against each other on every occasion, animated, not like the parties subsisting among us at present, by certain known principles of action, which may be said to ennoble such contests, but by petty malignant jealousies, arising from different shades of

colour, different conformations of the nose or the shin, each carrying with it a claim to more or less consideration. Does not every truehearted American shrink and scoff, at sharing, or rather surrendering his rights to factions animated by such considerations, instead of his own lofty preferences or dislikes, founded on the love of liberty and the fear of despotism? Let it also be borne in mind that all these varieties of shades and colours would, by a natural instinct, unite against the whites as the highest grade, and thus, by outvoting, strip them of their dominion, and place them at the foot of the ladder of degradation.

The idea of educating the children of the free white citizens of the United States to consider the blacks their equals, is founded on a total ignorance of nature, its affinities and antipathies. These antipathies may be for a moment overcome or forgotten in the madness of sensuality, but they return again with the greater force from their temporary suspension. White and black children never associate together on terms of perfect equality, from the moment the former begin to reason. There exist physical incongruities which cannot be permanently reconciled; and let us add, that we have a right to conclude, from all history and experience, that there is an equal disparity of mental organi-

zation. The difference seems more than skin-deep. The experience of thousands of years stands arrayed against the principle of equality between the white men and the blacks. Thousands, tens of thousands, of the former, in all ages and nations, have triumphed over every barrier of despotism and slavery; have overcome all the obstacles of their situation, the deficiencies of education, the prejudices of their age and country, the sense of degradation, the laws, as it were, of fate itself, and become lights of the age, leaders of their race. Has the black man ever exhibited similar energies, or achieved such triumphs in his native land or anywhere else? All that he has ever done is to approach to the lowest scale of intellectual eminence; and the world has demonstrated its settled opinion of his inferiority, by pronouncing even this a wonder. Within the last half century, the benefits of education, and the means of acquiring property as well as respectability, have been afforded to great numbers of free blacks, and every means has been resorted to for the purpose of instilling into them ideas of equality.

And what has been the result, ninety-nine times in a hundred? Idleness, insolence, and profligacy. Instead of striving to approach the sphere of the white man by becoming expert in some trade or

business—some liberal pursuit or daring adventure—his ambition is limited to aping his dress, imitating his follies, caricaturing his manners. In the city of New-York are upward of twenty thousand free blacks; and the right of suffrage is given by the constitution to all who possess a freehold of one hundred dollars, if we do not mistake the sum. Out of all these thousands, not more than a hundred freeholders are found. What prevents them from acquiring property? They have precisely the same incentives as the white man; like him they have wants to supply and families to maintain; they have civil rights like him to exercise their ambition; and though they may not successfully aspire to high offices of state, there is no obstacle to their becoming of consequence by acquiring an influence over their own colour, which is assuredly a noble object of ambition.

There is nothing under heaven to prevent an industrious, honest, prudent free negro from acquiring property here. On the contrary, there is every disposition to encourage and foster his efforts. He is looked upon as something remarkable; an exception to his kind—a minor miracle; and having once established a character, there is a feeling of kindness, mingled with a sentiment of pity, which operates highly in his favour. He meets men of business at least on equal terms;

and though this may not be the case in his social relations, still, the advantages he derives from his integrity and talents, are such as in all ages have been found sufficient to stimulate the white man to the highest efforts of body and mind. Still less has the negro, whether free or a slave, in his own country or elsewhere, ever attained distinction in intellectual acquirements, in arts, science, or literature, although the means have been afforded in thousands of instances. He has scarcely reached the confines of mediocrity, and appears indifferent to almost every acquirement except dancing and music—one, the favourite accomplishment of weak and frivolous minds, the other, the divinity of worn-out nations. Even in these they do not arrive at originality, and have never been known to make any improvement on others. It cannot be said that they are depressed here by the consciousness that all their efforts would fail in acquiring those rewards that wait on genius. In the present state of public feeling, there can be no doubt that a tolerable African poet, novelist, artist, philosopher, or musician, would meet with a patronage and excite an admiration, beyond anything which a white man of equal talents could hope to receive.

It may be urged, in reply to this, that the negroes labour under the consciousness of being

looked upon as an inferior race, and that their genius is repressed by the sense of degradation; that their minds are fettered, their intellects deadened and paralyzed by a conviction, that, do what they will, they cannot overcome the disadvantages of their peculiar state, or rise to the level of the white man. But has not the latter, in every age and nation, been some time or other fettered by similar disadvantages? The time has been when the people of Europe were subjected to a state of hereditary vassalage, carrying with it all the attributes of slavery. They possessed no property—they enjoyed no political rights; and the distance between them and the feudal lords was as broad, and apparently as impassable, as that between the slave of the United States and his master. The distinction of colour alone was wanting to render the similitude complete. Yet the mind of the white man, gradually, by mighty efforts, and by a series of irresistible expansions, rose superior to all the disadvantages of his situation, and achieved victory after victory over what seemed invincible to human efforts. He never sunk to the level of the negro; his mind was not subjugated; he possessed within himself the principle of regeneration, and to this day continues marching steadily, resolutely, irresistibly forward to his destiny, which is to be free.

The mind of the African, not only in his native country, but through every change, and in all circumstances, seems in a great degree divested of this divine attribute of progressive improvement. In his own country he has, for a long series of ages, remained in the same state of barbarism. For aught we can gather from history, the woolly-headed race of Africans had the same opportunities for improvement that have fallen to the lot of the inhabitants of Asia and Europe. A portion of them lived contiguous to the Mediterranean—that famous sea along whose shores was concentrated the arts and literature of the world; the Carthaginians, rivals of Rome in war, in commerce, and in civilization, long flourished on their borders; the Romans established provinces among them; and the Saracens, then the most polished race of mankind, founded an empire at their doors. Yet they have never awakened from their long sleep of barbarism. They remained, and still remain, savages and pagans, destitute of the rudiments of civilization; three-fourths of them hereditary slaves, and the remainder subject to the will of little arbitrary despots, whose tyranny is proportioned to the insignificance of their dominions. Without the virtues of barbarians, they possess the vices of a corrupted race; and

no one can peruse the travels of Mungo Park without receiving the conviction that they are a treacherous, inhospitable, and worthless breed. Even at this moment the news has arrived, that they have massacred a colony of their own colour, established for the most benevolent purposes, on their shores, and on a plan which, if ultimately successful, may free millions of their race from bondage, while it introduces, if any means are adequate to such a purpose, civilization and Christianity into the bosom of their country.

They seem, indeed, like their own native deserts, to be incapable of cultivation, destitute of the capacity of improvement. The dews that would seem desirous to bless them produce no verdure ; the rains only descend to sink into the barren insatiable soil, that gives back nothing in return. The sun, which in happier climes warms into maturity all the beneficent products of nature, here only scorches and consumes them ; the breezes which are elsewhere the harbingers of health and pleasure, of coolness and refreshment, here come freighted with disease and death ; the rivers, along whose borders alone man can exist, and only the black man, while they diffuse fertility, send forth exhalations fatal to all others ; and the white traveller or missionary that comes hither to teach

them the true religion, falls a martyr to his purpose. It may be said, indeed, with emphatic truth, that Africa is the region of desert sterility, of savage beasts and savage men, that cannot compare with the white race of Europe, or their descendants in the New World, who, under every disadvantage of situation, have attained to an elevated superiority which they now seem anxious to sacrifice in the desperate hope, that instead of sinking to the dead level of the African, they will be able to lift him to their own. Admitting, however, the theory, that the inferiority of the negro in the United States, and every other country in which he has been held in bondage, may be traced to that gradual debasement which is the natural result of successive generations of slavery, and that an equal succession of generations of freemen will bring them up to the level of equality with ourselves, it seems somewhat unreasonable to call upon the South to pay the penalty, and bear all the consequences of the experiment.

The freemen of the United States have been stigmatized as aristocrats,* because they refuse to become accomplices in this conspiracy against themselves. If they are really aristocrats, it is

* See Mr. O'Connell's rhapsodies.

certainly on a noble and elevated scale. They support the great and universal aristocracy of mind. They maintain the superiority, not of birth, title, or usurpation, but of intellect and civilization. In short, they remain true to their allegiance to the dignity of their nature, and reject with an honourable disdain the loathsome idea of sacrificing the natural aristocracy of virtue and talent for the purpose of voluntarily degrading their very being by an inferior mixture. They never will consent to become traitors to themselves and their peculiar species. They cannot be persuaded or bullied into such an abandonment of their superiority; nor will all the power of the British press, backed by British emissaries, and the burly declamations of Mr. O'Connell, convince them that the law of God, or the law of nature, exacts the sacrifice of their birthright, which is nothing less than the noble distinction which nature has bestowed on the great aristocracy of the white man. This is the aristocracy to which they aspire, founded on the only legitimate basis of courage, intellect, vigour, enterprise, and perseverance. They will never prostitute that inheritance at the shrine of an abstract principle, nor be frightened from their dominion by fanatics, at home

or abroad. The project of amalgamation is hopeless and impracticable.

It remains then to inquire into the precise relations which alone can subsist between equal, or nearly equal numbers of white and black men, living together; the one possessing all the property, as well as all the political power, the other, of course, destitute of both; or on the other hand without property, yet admitted to all the rights of citizens.

In thus dissenting from the doctrine of entire equality between the white and black races of men, it is far from our design to insinuate that the latter are not justly entitled to a full participation in whatever offices of benevolence may conduce to their welfare and happiness. The lower they may be in the scale of rational beings, the more they are entitled to our sympathies in their behalf. But it seems to us that these sympathies might be displayed to better purpose, in doing all we can to make them happy in their present state, than in desperate efforts to elevate them to another for which all past experience shows them to be greatly disqualified.

In making them believe themselves unhappy, we confer no benefit, unless we at the same time afford them the means of happiness. In giving

them knowledge, we tempt them to that forbidden fruit, the taste of which banished our first parents from peace and content ; for nothing is more certain than that knowledge, which disqualifies us for the enjoyment of the means of happiness we possess, without enabling us to obtain those we desire, is but a type of the gift of Satan in the garden of Eden. It is only when we possess a right to the exercise and enjoyment of every acquisition, that its attainment is at all desirable or salutary. A clear perception of the blessings of liberty, without the prospect of ever attaining to them, is equivalent to the tortures of Tantalus. To be chained to a rock, and hear the waters gurgling at our foot, to touch yet not be able to taste, adds tenfold to the miseries of thirst. To dream of freedom every night and awake every morning a slave, is to aggravate our impatience of all restraint ; and never did inspiration give utterance to a truer axiom, than did the poet when he said—

“ Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.”

One thing, however, is practicable, and will do more to pluck the sting from the heart of the slave than all the wild schemes of fanatical reformers. It is to treat them with a patriarchal kindness,

“forbearing threatening,” as the greatest of the apostles enjoins ; making due allowances for their ignorance, and for the peculiarity of their tempers and disposition ; giving them such food, raiment, and lodging, as their habits and necessities require ; permitting them the free enjoyment of their holy-days, and their hours of rest and relaxation ; interchanging with them all those kind offices not incompatible with the relations that subsist between the master and slave ; exacting from them nothing but a fair return for protection and maintenance ; and taking special care that the sick, the children, and the aged who are past labour, are provided with everything essential to their comfort.

That such is the treatment, except in a few rare instances, of the slaves of the South, all who have resided in that quarter will bear testimony, if they speak the truth. Slavery is becoming gradually divested of all its harsh features, and is now only the bugbear of imagination. If the masters are not deterred from further concessions by the unwarrantable interference of the abolitionists, the period will soon come, if it has not already come, when the slave of the South will have little cause to envy the situation of the other labouring classes of the world. They will have nothing to desire but what is equally the object of pursuit to all man-

kind, namely, some fancied good beyond their reach, or which, if attained, either detracts from their happiness, or leaves them just where they were before.

It may possibly be objected to us, that these and similar sentiments scattered through this work, savour of optimism, and consequently tend to discourage all efforts in behalf of public or individual happiness. But if fairly scrutinized, such will not be found to be the case; for, though all mankind were optimists in theory, still there would be none in practice. Our abstract opinions have little, if any influence over our conduct. We are impelled to action by our wants or our passions, not by our metaphysical refinements; and the stoutest believer in the equal, unalterable happiness of all mankind, will not the less ardently labour to increase his own.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Social and Political Relations that would subsist between the Whites and the Blacks, in case of the Emancipation of the latter.

It will be sufficiently explicit, without resorting to minute calculations, to state that taking the aggregate population of the states in which slavery prevails, the number of blacks is not greatly inferior to that of the whites. The former are not equally distributed. In some places, they greatly preponderate; in others, they are outnumbered by the latter. The former is the case all along the seaboard of the southern states, and it is believed in Louisiana and Mississippi; the latter, in the interior and mountainous parts, where the climate permits the labour of white men. Suppose all the slaves spontaneously set free at once, or by degrees, and at the same time admitted to a participation of the social and political rights of free citizens. What may rational reflecting men anticipate as the result?

Separated as are the two races by impassable barriers ; carrying in their very faces the badge of that separation, and animated as they must necessarily be by conflicting interests, there can be no doubt that the first struggle would be for ascendancy in political power, and that it would be one of far greater excitement than the ordinary contests of parties in the United States. The master with all his ancient *prejudices*, if you please, all his accustomed ideas and habits of superiority, would be obliged to enter into a struggle for power with his quondam slave ; the latter, flushed with all the insolence of newly acquired freedom, and glowing not only with the recollections of the past, but the hopes of the future. Would such a contest be a peaceable one ? Would it approximate to our ordinary elections, in which the struggle is between two parties recognising in each other equals and associates, while here it will be whether the master shall be governed by his former slave ? Impossible. Elections would become battles ; and blood, not ballots, would decide the mastery. The body politic would be rent asunder by eternal and inveterate struggles ; civil strife would ensue, and a deadly war of extermination be the end of this woful experiment of philanthropy, where the num-

bers of the two races were any way equal. Where the blacks outnumbered the whites, the latter would pass under the yoke of the negro, and become the victims of a legislation of ignorant slaves, unacquainted with every principle of civil liberty or the rights of property, and prepared by the doctrines of the abolitionists to believe that it would be in accordance with the law of God and the rights of nature to claim an equal share of the wealth of the United States. The white race would either become victims or exiles, for it is impossible to conceive they could live under a government so constituted.

Let us now inquire what would be the social relations between the white and the black races, in the event of universal emancipation. No one acquainted with the circumstances under which this must take place, can for a single instant believe the latter would be admitted to an equality of social intercourse with the families of their former masters, though they might among themselves enjoy all these privileges, and ape them in their modes of living, so far as their means might permit. This, however, would not satisfy them, for it is one of the invariable characteristics of human nature to aspire to an association with those we have always been accustomed to consider our su-

periors. This universal foible belongs to all classes and colours, yet is strongest in the two extremes of life, which here, as in everything else, approach each other. No class of mankind, with the exception of our negroes, aspires with such vehement loyalty to an intimacy, or even a mere speaking acquaintance with those above them as the aristocracy of Europe. To be admitted to the social circle of the king is an honour for which they will sacrifice both personal dignity and independence. They will, therefore, easily comprehend the anxiety of the slave to be admitted to the social fireside of his master, and with what bitter feelings of mortification he will meet a repulse, now when he has been ennobled, as it were, by emancipation.

The blacks, though enjoying equal political rights, would be for ever excluded from all social equality, and that in a much greater degree than the distinction of ranks now occasions in Europe. This, without doubt, would prove a fruitful source of gnawing irritation and jealous malignity, far more venomous than the feeling with which the starving Irish pauper contemplates the splendid nobleman rioting in luxury, because the pauper sighs only for bread, not equality; whereas the emancipated negro receives at the same time the

boon of equal rights and an equal voice in the state. Yet we see the fruits of such a feeling in the dark chronicles of desperate insurrections, midnight violence, and murders, on one hand ; military law, drumhead court martials, and pitiless executions on the other. Even Mr. O'Connell, it would seem, might find in the situation of his own native land sufficient to monopolize all his sympathies, and refrain, as well from condescending to the profound humility of accepting the charity of a people who, according to his own account, are themselves objects of charity, as from the deep ingratitude of denouncing a country which is now, and long has been, the sole refuge of his countrymen from starvation.

From every consideration of the subject, it will appear to the last degree improbable, if not absolutely impossible, that an equal, or nearly equal number of whites and free blacks, enjoying the same political rights, could live in peace and harmony together. They could never be equal in other respects ; and nothing but the complete subjugation of one could prevent eternal strife. They would form distinct irreconcilable factions, inflexible in their opposition, and the state be convulsed with endless conflicts. Without property, yet with equal rights and superior numbers, the blacks would

wrest from their ancient masters the power of the state, and beyond doubt exercise it for the purpose of oppressing them. Without any rational ideas of government, they would aspire to govern. Without those habits and that experience, which are always indispensable to self-government, they would endeavour to modify the state to suit their own wayward purposes; and without any other religion than fanaticism, the piety of ignorance, they would become the dictators of the public faith. Their ascendancy would be a despotism over white men, and the fabric of civilization and liberty, which consumed ages in its construction, would be demolished in a few years by the relentless fury of ignorant barbarians. A new Africa would spring up in the place of free and enlightened states, and the race of the white men be either forced to abandon their homes, or to level themselves with the degradation around. Is this a consummation for philanthropy, religion, or philosophy to triumph at, or for rational, enlightened men to contemplate with glowing anticipations? Does an assertion of the law of God and the rights of nature lead to such consequences? and are these the ordinary fruits of good actions? It is blasphemy to maintain such fatal dogmas. They are the box of Pandora; the gift of false

gods, stuffed with malignant evils, which to open is the signal for misery to mankind.

Let us now proceed to a summary view of the social and political relations which would naturally subsist between the whites and the blacks, in the event of the slaves being emancipated without a participation in civil rights, by which is here meant a voice in the government.

With the ideas and feelings which must inevitably result from the new station they occupied, it would be utterly impossible to keep them in subjection to the laws, or to restrain them within the limits of their social duties, except by force. With them freedom is but another name for licentiousness and idleness. Disorganization, hunger, and distress of every kind, with their natural progeny of crimes, would take place of the virtues of contentment and obedience, and for protection and maintenance they would exchange stripes and jails. It is impossible to believe that a starving rabble, equal, or superior in numbers to the sober and comfortable citizens, can subsist in a community, under these circumstances, without convulsing or overturning it, unless kept in subjection by a military power. It would be thus with this vast body of emancipated slaves. They would never be content with the bare boon of a release from bondage.

It is not in human nature to starve, where the means of preventing it are at hand ; nor is it within the limits of possibility, that this rabble of newly created freemen could endure the plenty of the white man, or that they would not at once make use of their numbers, by attempting to wrest from him a part, if not the whole, of his property. As little is it to be presumed that the whites would not resist this invasion of their rights ; and thus would be engendered the seeds of a civil, carrying with it all the attributes of a servile war, which could only end in the subjection, exile, or extermination of one or other of the parties.

Thus the freeing of the blacks, without admitting them to a share of political rights, the consequences of which have already been presented, would, in all human probability, produce the most disastrous dissensions between the master and slave. It would introduce into the states where this procedure was adopted, a condition of society, which could not by any possibility long continue, for it carries in its bosom the seeds of its own dissolution, in the bitter and malignant feelings with which a majority of those composing it would contemplate its existence. Either the whites must compel obedience to those laws which the majority of the inhabitants had no voice in making, or there would

necessarily result a phenomenon in civil society, namely, a government to which more than one half the people refused obedience. This is an absurdity which would only merit ridicule and contempt, were it not for its deplorable consequences.

Various other obstacles present themselves to the immediate emancipation of the slaves of the United States, but the apprehension of being tedious prevents their enumeration here. Enough, it is believed, has been adduced to prove to all rational and impartial readers, that such a measure would be equally fatal to the master and the slave. It cannot, therefore, recommend itself by any consideration of justice, expediency, or humanity; it cannot plead in its behalf the general law of God, which is the auxiliary, if not the source, of all human happiness; nor does it come within the definition of a good action, because it will not increase the enjoyments of those on whom its immediate influence operates.

One other alternative has been presented. It is suggested that the emancipated slaves would find their way to the North. But how are they to get here? Who is to support them by the way? or are they to travel like clouds of locusts, laying waste, and devouring the fruits of the earth? What is to become of their bedrid parents, and

helpless children? Such numbers could not work their way for hundreds of miles, and such an army of paupers would exhaust the charity of the abolitionists themselves. But admitting they arrived safe here, and admitting, what all experience contradicts, that these free blacks were willing to work, where are they to procure employment, without displacing an equal number of Mr. O'Connell's countrymen, who would become a burden instead of a benefit to society? No; these wretched wanderers would perish by thousands in their pilgrimage to the new land of promise; and those who survived, be dependant, no one can tell how long, on public munificence or private charity. Thus, whichever way we cast our eyes, in whatever light the subject of abolition is viewed, the result is equally discouraging. It cannot be accomplished without adding to the miseries of all concerned, and therefore does not come under the description of a good action, which, as defined by moral writers, must increase the happiness of those within the sphere of its influence.

Since this chapter was written, few of our readers can be ignorant that the subject of abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia has been brought before Congress by the presentation of petitions from the little town of Wrentham and other parts of New-England. In the course of a

debate which sufficiently exemplified the danger of perpetually agitating this subject, a plan of abolition was indicated by an honourable member from Vermont, who, it would seem, is equally prepared to enfranchise the slaves, and disfranchise the freemasons. Indeed, as has already been observed, the most distinguishing characteristic of almost all the champions of the blacks, is an utter disregard to the rights of the white men.

The plan of the honourable member, so far as it was developed, appears to be pretty much the same in all its features with that now in a state of probation in the British colonies. It seems we are never to be emancipated from the thralldom of British example. It is enough for many of our enlightened statesmen and philanthropists, that England does anything whatever, to induce them to follow the lead; and we appear determined to make all the amends in our power for having once had the hardihood to assert our independence, by surrendering it as soon as possible. Because England has thought proper to practise a philanthropic experiment at the expense of her colonies, we, forsooth, must attempt the same game, without stopping to inquire whether the circumstances are not altogether different, or waiting the result of the trial. We must tie ourselves to the apron-

string of our old lady-mother, and never pretend to look at ourselves except through her spectacles. That we have derived great benefits from early English examples cannot be denied ; and that England still presents very many things worthy of our imitation is equally certain. But the habit may be carried to the extreme of servility. There is one characteristic, however, which we would do well to copy, namely, that high national feeling which has been and still is the main source of her greatness.

The project of the member from Vermont, at least so we understand it, contemplates educating the slaves, preparatory to, or simultaneously with their manumission. When so educated, it is presumed they are to enter on the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens, and have an equal voice in the government. We would beg permission to ask the honourable member, if he believes that the mere education of slaves will qualify them for the enjoyments and responsibilities of free citizens ? Whether it never occurred to him, that the habit of self-government ; of managing our own affairs ; providing for our own, and the necessities of our families ; exercising our opinions ; consulting our judgments, and regulating our inter-

course with society, are not indispensable requisites to the fulfilment of our duties and the enjoyment of our rights as freemen? Does he believe all, or any of these can be learned from books, or imbibed with the lessons of the schoolmaster? If he does, he can have had but little experience of the world, or else belongs to that class of men whom experience only confirms in error.

To teach the slave the abstract principles of freedom, without the necessary commentary of their practical exercise, would be to make him a libertine in morals and an anarchist in politics. He would become ungovernable except by the restraints of force, and would thus be brought back to a state worse than his original one, because he would be the slave of a system of severe coercion, without any of the advantages of a state of dependence. The experiment has been tried thousands of times in the United States, and the result is much the same. It has converted a useful slave into a worthless citizen. It is only in the school of practice that men become qualified for freedom, and it takes several generations to make freemen. We cannot learn it as we do a trade.

Until the honourable member from Vermont develops the minutiae of his project, we cannot, of course, subject it to the test of further examination

Who is to be at the expense of educating the blacks for the enjoyment of liberty, and by what system of discipline they are to be initiated into the habits of freemen, is yet a mystery. All we know is, that hitherto such attempts have signally failed; and it is believed that the view we have taken of the consequences which seem the inevitable result of an association of equal numbers of whites and blacks, with the single exception of the state of slavery, sufficiently indicates that the success of such a plan would add nothing to the triumphs of philanthropy.

Doctor Madden, a distinguished traveller, and one whose opportunities of observation in various parts of the world have been superior to most men, has lately published a work, entitled "A Twelve-month's Residence in the West Indies, during the transition from Slavery to Apprenticeship,"* which is recommended to the serious attention of all who feel a sincere interest in the subject, and are actuated by no other desire than that of increasing the sum of human happiness.

Dr. Madden gives no decided opinion on the

* See an excellent article on this and other publications on the subject, in the American Quarterly Review for December, 1835.

subject; but it is evident that the experiment of emancipation is about to fail in all its salutary consequences. The products of the West India islands are rapidly decreasing, and the number of whites still more rapidly. It is daily becoming more evident that they will find it impossible to remain, when the blacks are admitted into a full community of rights; and the period is probably not far distant, when St. Domingo will not be the only example of the blessings of emancipation. The whites will be exiled, and these fruitful isles become the paradise of idleness, ignorance, and barbarism. This is probably what the royal and aristocratic abolitionists of Europe desire, since it is only in such a state of things becoming universal, that they can hope to retain their monopoly of wealth, power, and privileges. They can no longer domineer over civilized white men.

The honourable member from Vermont, in the course of his development, incautiously, we think, disclosed a secret, which may in some measure account for much of the hostility of our philanthropists to the institution of slavery. One of its most crying sins, according to the honourable member, is that of adding to the political

weight of the republican party, by a partial representation of slaves in the House of Representatives. This reminds us that the same confession was made in the final stage of the discussion on the famous Missouri question, by the leaders of the same party, in both houses of Congress, when it was supposed the opponents of the admission of that state into the Union had secured a decided majority. It was then distinctly admitted, nay avowed, that "IT WAS A QUESTION NOT OF HUMANITY BUT OF POWER." It was a stepping stone to the elevation of a party then, as now, in a minority; and then, as now, assuming the mask of philanthropy. This bold avowal of hypocrisy was fatal to their whole scheme of policy. There was, at that time, as there assuredly is at present, a number of members who acted upon principles of humanity and justice, and rejected with scorn the idea of being made the tools of ambitious politicians. They did what it is to be hoped they will do now, decline to become the cats-paws of a cabal, which, whether as antimasonic, antimail, or antislavery, is equally the enemy of liberty; equally the foe of religion and morality, in making one the cloak of political ambition, the other an excuse for interfering with the long acknowledged

rights of free citizens. The most dangerous politicians are those who seek an alliance with fanaticism, and thus intrude into our political system, a principle which affects to be independent of the laws and the constitution.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Right of Property in Slaves.

"*Man cannot hold property in man,*" is another self-created, self-supported dogma of the advocates of immediate emancipation. The unjust possession of property, must be derived from its acquisition being contrary to the declared will of the Supreme Being, the inalienable rights of nature, or the laws of the land. The first two points having been involved in the preceding discussion, it is only necessary to consider the last.

Two great principles have been so universally recognised and acted upon, by all civilized nations, living under a government of laws, that they may now be considered as established beyond question. The first is, that the right to property is founded on possession guarantied by the law; the second, that after a certain period, this right is not invalidated by the manner in which that possession was acquired. Nine tenths, if not the whole of the property of the world is founded, not on purchase, but conquest. If

we go back to the earliest periods of history, we shall find that the then inhabitants of every country always referred to some distant period, in which it was possessed by a different people, who were either extirpated or driven away by the valour of their ancestors. Among barbarians, and afterwards when the feudal system prevailed in Europe, conquest was equivalent to an almost-total change of property. The nobles, then the sole possessors of the land, were despoiled, and the conqueror became the possessor. Three times at least, has a great portion of the property of England changed hands by conquest; and at this moment it is held by the tenure of rapine alone. The holders can only go back to the time of William the Norman for a title to their possessions. It is needless to multiply examples of what is in fact the history of all nations, except our own, which has never yet been, and we trust in God never will be, conquered. Our history will only be referred to for the purpose of illustrating the position above assumed. The United States were once the property of the Indian tribes, and though a considerable portion was fairly purchased, by far the largest was obtained by conquest alone.

However defective such a title may be originally, it acquires force and authority by the lapse

of time, and the absolute necessity of putting some limit to the period in which a peaceable possession of property implies an unimpeachable right. If, from a feeling of compunction, some nice scruple of conscience, or in accordance with some new standard of moral and religious obligation established by fanatical expounders, it should be determined by the present possessors of the lands parcelled out by William the Conqueror, to restore them to the descendants of the ancient Saxons—or, to go still farther, the ancient Romans; or, still beyond, to the ancient Britons, who once possessed the country—where shall they find the real heirs, and how will these establish a direct descent from the rightful proprietors? Or should the good people of the United States be smitten with a compunctious feeling, and desire to give back to the Indian tribes, who once roamed and hunted over them, those territories now smiling in cultivation, where will they find their descendants? And if they did, what would those savages do with these cultivated fields, now stripped of their interminable forests, and of the game which once abounded in them? They would perish under this act of sublime retribution; and the present occupants would voluntarily incur exile and poverty, without the

consolation of being rewarded for their sacrifices, by the refreshing spectacle of savage happiness.

Whatever, therefore, may be the original foundation of a right, there arises, from the very nature of things, a necessity, that after a certain period of quiet possession, under a special or general law of the land, it should be for ever after unassailable, on any defect of title. The period is not uniform in all civilized nations; but wherever a written system of laws exists, some statute of limitation cuts off the source of eternal and vexatious claims, which might otherwise be brought forward, when time, and its various accidents, will naturally have rendered it difficult if not impossible to rebut them. Such a law is necessary to the security and value of property, and such a law is in force in every state of this Union. Under this law the right to property, of which possession has been had the requisite number of years, is secured ever after. The real foundation of the right of property is therefore the law of the land, and not any abstract principle of religion or morality.

And this law of the land, being based on the principle that it supercedes the law of force, and guaranties the peaceable possession of property after the expiration of a certain time, is consonant so far as human laws can be, to the laws of the

Supreme Being. It may occasionally present instances of injustice, and sanction graybeard frauds ; yet still it is founded on a salutary general principle, which, beyond doubt, practically conduces to the happiness of mankind, and is therefore sustained by the extent of its benefits compared with the evils it may produce. This is all that can be expected from human laws ; and were more to be required, it could not be obtained until perfection becomes an attribute of the works of man. By placing the sanction of right on the ground of possession, the law does not intend to justify any person in retaining a property acquired by fraud, and which the inheritor knows was thus acquired. The moral obligation remains the same ; but after the expiration of the prescribed period, the fraudulent possessor must be left to his own conscience and the justice of Heaven.

If we examine the right of the master to the property of the slave, as it exists in the South, we shall find it, equally with the right to any other species of property, based on the law of the land, as it has existed for more than two hundred years, with no variation in principle. In addition to this, the constitution of the United States, which is the paramount law, although with a sort of squeamishness savouring of affectation it forbears all mention

of slaves, is known to have had a direct reference to them in the following provisions :—

“Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the states which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, *three fifths of all other persons.*

“The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by congress, prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight ; but a tax may be imposed on such importation not exceeding ten dollars for each person.

“No person held to service or labour in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labour ; but shall be delivered upon the claim of the party to whom such labour or service may be due.”

These three articles, as we before observed, are known to have had a direct reference to slaves, and indeed can apply to no others. The first distinctly recognises the right to the property in slaves, by

making it the basis of taxation and representation. The second sustains the right, by admitting the migration or importation of slaves until a certain specified period ; and the third protects it, by enabling the master to reclaim his slave in any state where he may take refuge. These distinct provisions constitute a guarantee, more complete as well as specific, than was thought necessary to any other species of property ; and it was given to protect the South against a newborn spirit of philanthropy which menaced their rights. No historical fact is better known or more completely established, than that the southern states would not have acceded to the Union, under the new constitution, without this security to their possessions. It constituted the condition of their acquiescence, and its infraction will be a virtual dissolution of the confederacy, because it violates a provision without which it never would have existed. The general government and the sister states, therefore, owe it to their own obligations as well as their own honour, not only to refrain from tampering with these rights, but to secure the southern states in their possession, by every means not forbidden by the instrument which guaranties them. Those, the sole basis of whose proceedings is laid in a violation of the constitu-

tion and laws, have no right to complain should they receive the benefit of their own latitudinarian principles, and be punished for those wholesale libels, which, if uttered against individuals, would subject them to the severest penalties.

The local laws of the states in which slavery prevails, are still more specific in recognising slaves as property, as may be seen in the abstract of the statutes of Virginia, which will be given hereafter. With these, however, we of the other states have nothing to do, nor do we possess a right to interfere with them, any more than with the distinction of *castes* among the Hindoos, or the slavery of the boors of Russia. If they are repugnant to our feelings, so are these. The lower castes among the Hindoos are condemned to a state to which that of the slaves of the United States is a paradise. They are the slaves of the higher castes, without any of the benefits of slavery which will be hereafter stated; and they are condemned to an hereditary degradation, lower, by a thousand degrees, than that of any negro that ever existed among us. Why does not England exert its power over the destinies of Hindostan, to remedy these crying outrages on the principles of universal philanthropy, instead of sending missionaries among

us to preach sedition, and advocate the cutting of throats, besides employing the whole force of her press to sow the seeds of contention among us ? It is not our cue, however, to turn Quixotes in philanthropy, or to go about freeing banditti from chains and lions from cages. It is not our interest, to inundate that vast region with pictures calculated to excite insurrection and murder, reinforced by reviews, sermons, tracts, and resolutions, distinctly and vehemently exhorting them to indiscriminate massacre. We have as good a right, and the duty to do this is equally imperative, with that of striving all in our power to inflict a servile war on our brethren of the South, for whose civil institutions we are no more responsible than for those of India or Russia. Nay, the project would be far more judicious, since the liberation of the Russian white slave would naturally lead to at least a gradual regeneration and amalgamation ; for there are none of those natural and invincible barriers, no contrast of colour, or odours, or hair, or physical conformation, or mental organization, to create an incompatibility between the different orders of people. The emancipation of the peasantry and labouring classes of Europe, by which is meant placing them on a level with the aristocracy in regard to civil rights, might therefore rationally be

desired as the prelude to a salutary equality ; whereas that of the slaves of the United States, if our former reasonings are well founded, would be the forerunner of the destruction of rational liberty, and the introduction of barbarism.

We of the North possess no right, as members of the confederation, much less are we under any obligation, to interfere with the relations of master and slave in the South. We have no obligation to pursue a course which cannot fail of producing the most disastrous consequences to our political union, as well as to the master and slave. We have no obligation to do evil that good may ensue. We have no obligation to deprive, or take indirect means of depriving, a large portion of our fellow-citizens of their property, or to render its possession a curse instead of a blessing, on the ground of an abstract principle, sustained neither by reason nor religion. We have no obligation to sacrifice our white brethren and their families on the altar of an experiment which all past experience repudiates as fallacious ; nor have we any obligation to sport with human rights, legally and constitutionally secured, in affecting to redress human wrongs.

The petitions for the abolition of slavery, every year presented to Congress, signed by people who

neither see nor feel its consequences, whatever they may be, we consider an abuse of a constitutional right. The civil institutions of a state, so long as they are not repugnant to the fundamental principles of the general government, as declared in the constitution, are beyond the reach of the other states, who possess no right whatever to interfere with them. The same with the District of Columbia, where congress can no more legislate in the teeth of that constitution, than in any one of the states. It has no more right to vote away the property in slaves than any other property, and the attempt would be a gross violation of the rights of the citizens, even though a majority of them should assent to the measure ; for a majority has no power over the rights of property, nor can it sanction their violation. The whole power of the state cannot take away any portion of private property without paying for it, even should it be absolutely required for the public good. It may tax us, in common with all other citizens, but that is the extent of its prerogative. But to return to the subject of petitions. That which does not either immediately or remotely affect our rights, our interests, our prosperity, or our happiness, by some outward and visible agency which all men distinctly comprehend, can be no "grievance ;" it therefore requires no "redress"

in regard to us, and consequently no petition on our part.

Suppose the people of the South should be afflicted with an acute pang of sensibility, at hearing that in the middle, and most especially the eastern states, the daughters of the independent villagers and farmers performed all the menial offices of the household, and at public houses waited at table on all classes of travellers. Suppose they were to get another severe twinge of philanthropy, at seeing thousands and tens of thousands of white children working fourteen hours in the day at unwholesome employments in manufactories, at an age when the young slaves of the South are enjoying all the sweets of luxurious idleness. And suppose, taking example from the friends of the "entire human race," the people of the South were to institute societies, and send forth missionaries, and petition congress to abolish such barbarous servitude, on the ground of its being contrary to the law of God and the rights of nations. Would not such petitions be hooted out of congress, as impertinent intermeddlings with the habits, manners, and civil institutions of the people of the North? Is the task of waiting on strangers in a public house less unpleasant, to a delicate female, than the service of a slave to his mas-

ter? Or is the labour of the white children in the manufactories one whit more voluntary in fact than that of a slave in the South?

Yet we do not find them getting into a paroxysm of commiseration at these crying enormities, which to them are as offensive to the feelings of humanity as the condition of the slave is to the sentimentalism of the day, which seems to have abandoned antimasonry and gone over to antislavery. Were the people of the different sections of the United States to undertake to petition against everything that happened to be disagreeable to each other, congress would have a fine time of it, and that fraternal feeling so essential to the existence of the Union, would become a sacrifice to this modern, mischievous, meddling spirit, which is the offspring of fanaticism begot on ignorance or hypocrisy.

It might be well for the libertines of philanthropy, who consider all things possible, to bear in mind that a large portion of the real evils of this world has originated in wild attempts to cure imaginary ones. Empires have been laid waste and nations exterminated in abortive efforts to change the long established system of Providence, or in combating with what seemed evils, but which were only necessary ingredients in the various cup of life, and contributed to the great end of universal

good. The fanatics of religion and philanthropy have inflicted more miseries on the human race than they ever alleviated. They rush from one extreme to another with daring impetuosity, not choosing to remember that all extremes are pernicious, or that the Great Dispenser of wisdom and virtue, the Creator of man and the Sovereign of the universe, hath ordained that none of his blessings shall contribute to human happiness unless they are enjoyed in moderation. Overheated zeal, even in a good cause, has in every age of the world been the parent of persecution, slander, and bloodshed; and more victims have been offered up at the shrine of imaginary good than of real evil.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the alleged Disgrace reflected on the People of the United States by the Existence and Continuance of Slavery.

EVER since the British government abolished slavery in its colonies, by a gross violation of the rights of property, and an unwarrantable abuse of power, the press of that country has teemed with denunciations of the people of the United States. It would seem that neither man nor woman can either take up the pen or open their mouths, without indulging in cant or declamation on the inexhaustible topic of African bondage. If this new-born zeal proceeded from a pure impulse of humanity, it might be entitled to our respect, however it wounded our pride or our better feelings. But there is great reason to believe, that it derives much of its vigour and warmth from a source little allied to philanthropy. There is an inconsistency observed in the conduct of those most loud in their reprobation of the course pursued by the United

States in regard to the institution of slavery, which furnishes just ground for strong suspicion. It cannot have escaped the notice of our countrymen, who mingle in the society of foreigners, that the most devoted adherents of aristocracy, those who deride the miseries of the people of Ireland, and oppose with obstinate pertinacity the progress of free principles throughout the world, are the most tender in their sympathies in behalf of the negro slaves of the United States, the most loud in their declamations on the subject. There is not a despotic monarch in Europe who does not mourn over the wrongs of Africa ; and even the Emperor Nicholas himself, it is said, expresses a strong sympathy in favour of universal emancipation, with the exception of all white men. In fact, it cannot be denied that the enemies of liberty in Europe are the great and leading advocates of the natives of Africa. They seem to be playing on the credulity of the world, by affecting a marvellous regard to the rights of one colour, while resolutely withholding their rights from another ; and apparently strive to make some amends for their oppression at home, by crusading in behalf of human rights in the distant regions of the world ; thus gaining the credit of humanity without any sacrifice of interest. It is an ingenious contrivance, but cannot claim the merit of originality.

Be this as it may, there appears a wonderful unanimity in this sortie of the holy alliance in behalf of the slaves of the United States. Church and king, bishops and nobles, conservatives and liberators, seem all to have gathered themselves together and become our instructors in the practical application of our rights and our duties. Clergymen, bachelors of arts, travellers by profession, petticoated political economists, old women, and fugitives from justice, flock among us to become our teachers in the science of humanity, and expound the mysteries of revealed religion as well as natural law. But truly it hath been said that republics are always ungrateful, and nobody seems to thank them for their good offices, except their fellow labourers, the abolitionists.

There is, however, one extraordinary exception to this union of souls, and that is Mr. Daniel O'Connell, who has more than once invoked the vengeance of Heaven on this devoted land, which, while it holds out freedom and competence to hundreds of thousands of his starving countrymen, who flock hither as to a refuge and a home, wickedly and indecorously declines a compliance with his exceedingly rational, practicable demands for immediate abolition—in other words, for the creation of millions of paupers and vagabonds. This would at once degrade our slaves to the level of a large

portion of his fellow subjects. We say degrade, for the slave of the United States, living in perfect security, and exchanging his labour for protection and maintenance, is to our mind a far happier as well as more respectable being, than the miserable pauper white man subsisting on a wretched pittance, bestowed without charity, and received without gratitude.

Mr. O'Connell, the champion of Ireland, and its prospective liberator, has declared war against us in the true spirit of "mountain-dew" eloquence. He calls us "traitors and blasphemers, a congregation of two-legged wolves—American wolves"—doubtless the worst of all wolves—"monsters in human shape, who boast of their humanity and liberty, while they carry the hearts of tigers within them."

"If," continues Mr. O'Connell, "I ever find leisure to write to my countrymen in America, I will conjure them to laugh the republican slaveholders to scorn. I will tell them, whenever they meet an atrabilious American, to call out to him *Negro*. If the black skin of the African is sufficient to mark him for a slave, his yellow skin has no right to claim an exemption."

Such an experiment might be rather dangerous to his countrymen in the United States. The aforesaid "atrabilious" gentlemen are not apt at putting up with insults; and if Mr. O'Connell

himself were to venture on a pilgrimage hither, and utter such sentiments, there is not a gentleman in the southern states that would not promptly bring him to a severe reckoning. Mr. O'Connell, however, has already declared his intention never to honour us with his presence. This is a sensible mortification to the people, and especially the paupers of the United States, who it is understood had serious intentions of getting up a subscription in aid of the fund for supporting his patriotism.

To be serious, however. Mr. O'Connell is doing much harm to his countrymen in the United States by his intemperate denunciations. He will do still more should he ever write the letter he proposes. He may be assured, that if he does, and they should follow his advice, that cordial sympathy for the wrongs of Ireland, and that generous hospitality which have ever been shown to the emigrants from his country, will give place to feelings far different. An interference, as a body, with the relations of master and slave in the United States, will for ever shut the door against all future emigrants, or, at least, prevent their ever becoming citizens of this land of "two-legged wolves."

In order, however, so far as it may be in our power to prevent the intemperance of Mr. O'Connell from operating to the prejudice of his countrymen

in the United States, we feel it our duty, as friends of Ireland and Irishmen, to vindicate him from any intention whatever of wounding the feelings or calumniating the character of our country. There is, in our minds, no doubt that he really intended these wrathful denunciations as an ebullition of gratitude for the kindness with which his exiled brethren have ever been received into the bosom of our country. Mr. O'Connell is a native of Ireland, that generous, warmhearted, hospitable land, whose people may justly claim from all nations that welcome which they never fail to give to the stranger and sojourner among them. But no one will pretend to deny, that with all their high qualities of head and heart, their wit, their eloquence, and their towering imagination, they are prone to that figure of rhetoric called *a bull*; which consists in a happy substitution of what they do not mean, for what they really do mean. The origin of this phrase is said to have been a blunder which occurred a long while ago in classic old Tipperary, where a worthy Milesian mistook a bull for a cow, and attempted to milk him at the horns. There can be little doubt that Mr. O'Connell stood in this curious predicament. He certainly intended to pour the milk of human kindness into our bosoms, and pay us some handsome compliments on the score of the good old

fellowship which has so long subsisted between the two countries. But unluckily for us, a great Milesian bull came in his pathway, and caused such confusion in the fertile bog of his understanding, that the unfortunate gentleman perpetrated a catachresis, and fell into an outrageous strain of oburgation. Like poor Europa, he was ravished by a bull; and it is earnestly requested that no liberal-minded American will withhold his sympathy towards the liberator, for having thus done homage to the genius of his country in, as it were, attempting to milk a bull by the horns.

It may not be incurious to inquire in what chymical solution all the antipathies of church and state have been thus neutralized and brought into harmonious co-operation against the institutions of the United States.

There must be something extraordinary, some cement eminently adhesive, to have produced this miraculous conjunction of opposing bodies, which, to use the figure of my Lord Bacon, "like the iron and clay in Nebuchadnezzar's image, may cleave together, but will never incorporate." Let it no more be said that oil and vinegar will not mix together, when we see Sir Robert Peel and Mr. O'Connell uniting in denouncing the Colonization Society of the United States at a meeting of abolitionists in the city of London.

It can no longer be disguised that the United States are the bugbears of despotism in Europe. The freedom of their institutions, the universal diffusion of plenty, the absence of those factitious distinctions that weigh so heavily on the necks of the people of the Old World, their rapid unparalleled advance in numbers, wealth, and vigour, and the vast, uncircumscribed sphere they present for the exercise of industry and enterprise, are daily more and more attracting the attention of a large portion of those who wish to be free, as well as those who desire to prevent them. The new Medina of the West, seems destined, like that of the East, to become the centre whence a grand revolution, infinitely more favourable to the happiness of mankind, is to spread far and wide into the circumference of the civilized world. The United States of North America led the van—they set the first example; and unless that example can in some way or other be divested of its fascinations, those royal and aristocratic privileges on which the thrones of Europe are supported, will every day lose some portion of that reverence and respect which constitute their basis.

The people of that quarter are every day catching from the distant luminary of the West new glimpses of the light of liberty; and the more they see, the more they desire to bask in its sunshine.

They are becoming every day more deeply imbued with a love of those free principles and institutions which work such wonders on individual and national prosperity. It has become obvious to the more sagacious of those who banquet on the spoils of graybeard usurpations, that inspired by the example of the United States, the people of Europe are gradually preparing themselves to reclaim their rights, and to demand a relinquishment of the monopoly of wealth, founded on a monopoly of political power. This vast and increasing association of empires, self-governed, and supported on the broad basis of equal rights, must and will, by the force and influence of its example, work similar wonders in the Old World, to those it has already produced in South America, where it is feared that ignorance and superstition will finally triumph over liberty, and mar one of the fairest prospects that ever dawned upon mankind in any age or country. While it continues to present a glorious example of the blessings arising from the absence of those rigid and inflexible abuses, which have for ages pressed so heavily on the necks of the people, it must be obvious that all the obsolete and unreasonable prerogatives of kings and aristocracies, which were necessary perhaps at the period of their first existence, must ere long cease to exist. Nothing can save them ultimately but a conviction in the

minds of the people of Europe that the experiment of self-government has either entirely failed in the United States, or that in its consequences it does not realize the anticipations of theorists. The United States are therefore to be held up to the world as memorable examples of the absurdity of a great principle on which is based the liberties of mankind; their religion, their morals, their social character and habits, and above all their humanity and justice, are to be assailed by all the arts and influence of church and state abroad. England, by her still remembered maternal authority; by long established precedency in the eyes of our people; and above all by her means of influencing us derived from a common language, is most able, and at the same time most willing, to take the lead in the crusade against a child which is destined to add new honours to her name, new wreaths to her glory, new triumphs to her genius. She has accordingly shown discreditably conspicuous in a species of hostility which better suits toothless viragoes than great nations, one of which is destined to become in the New, what the other has been, perhaps still is, in the Old World.

It seems to have been one great object, so to exert the vast influence of her press and her literature, as to throw over us a dark mantle of oblo-

quy, which, while it obscured all the charms of youth and happiness, presented a picture of exaggerated deformity. All, or nearly all the English travellers in this country, have come hither apparently for no other purpose than to indulge a splenetic feeling, and collect new materials for calumny. They have exaggerated and caricatured the little peculiarities originating in the situation and circumstances of our countrymen, and metamorphosed all those characteristics which mark a free people in the full possession of their primitive energies, into the vices of barbarism. Rare and extreme cases of doubtful authority, are made by them the criterion of public manners and morals ; and the balance between the two nations is struck by a comparison of the refinements of the highest class in England with the lowest in the United States. If it was not the design of these writers to administer to the prejudices of those to whom they addressed themselves, or to pander to that hostility which our form of government and the success of its operation on the happiness of mankind inspires, to weaken in fact the influence of our example, then their course indicates a degree of gratuitous, unpurposed malignity, which, as it is without a rational motive, so is it without an apology.

This hostile feeling towards our national char-

acter and institutions has lately assumed a new and more mischievous disguise. It comes abroad masked under the semblance of humanity to the slave. It is employed in fomenting designs equally destructive to our peace and our union. The press of England teems with books, and tracts, and speeches, and paragraphs, reprehending the government of the United States for not doing what is impossible, and the people of the South for refusing to consent to the requisitions of sublimated theorists. Without examining into the subject, without making themselves in the least acquainted with the origin of the institution of slavery among us, or paying the slightest attention to the insuperable difficulties attending its abolishment, they pour upon our heads a stream of reproach, and attempt to bully us into submission to their arrogant demands of instant emancipation. We are denounced as a nation of liars and hypocrites, American wolves, and atrabilious tyrants, because we decline to come under the yoke of our own slaves, and debase the dignity of human nature by a process of amalgamation. We are charged with belying our declared principles in our practice; with wanton oppression and systematic cruelty; with being tyrants over one race of men, while insolently affecting to be the champions of the rights of all mankind.

If this violent ebullition of newborn philanthropy were really sincere, we might pardon their injustice out of regard to the motive. If it were really an emanation of that Divine precept which enjoins us to love our neighbour as ourselves, however we might regret the consequences, we would respect the source from whence they proceeded. But all experience teaches us that pure benevolence is not confined to one sect, one object, or one colour. We consequently have little faith in the purity of its motives, when seeing it shutting its eyes and ears to the abject and unhappy condition of people perishing at its door, and gazing with throbbing commiseration on the distant, perhaps imaginary sufferings of those on the other extremity of the world. We despise that false sentiment of humanity, which, while it hardens the hearts of Englishmen to the wretchedness of the people of Ireland, and sanctions the stern step-dame policy pursued for ages towards that ill-governed land, displays such keen susceptibility to the woes of the slaves of the United States, whose real situation shall be placed before the reader in due time. This truly dramatic philanthropy, which, like Garrick between tragedy and comedy, laughs with one side of its face at the hundreds of thousands of half-starved Irishmen who pay

tribute to Mr. O'Connell, while it weeps with the other over the plump, well-fed specimen of republican tyranny, with his cheek shining like polished ebony in the sun, may do very well on the mimic, but we are not satisfied with it on the real stage of life. Nor can we bring ourselves to reverence that benevolence which, while it gives twenty millions in paper promises to free the blacks of the West Indies, inflicts martial law and drumhead court martials on the people of Ireland, for resisting a system of oppression far more rigid and degrading, and a hundred times more lamentable in its consequences, than that of the master over the slave in the United States of America.

It requires a degree of faith in the doctrine of consistent inconsistencies which we do not possess, to believe in the sincerity of that philanthropy which ceases to operate precisely at the point where personal sacrifices are required. To relieve the people of Ireland, or the pale-faced paupers who contribute to enable England to undersell the world in her manufactures by the involuntary sacrifice of all the comforts of life, from their present state of wretchedness, would demand of English philanthropy sacrifices which it is not willing to make on the altar of benevolence. The church and the aristocracy, those great champions

of all mankind—except their neighbours—would be under the necessity of relinquishing some very substantial advantages of purse and power. The landholders, and great proprietors of manufactories would be called upon to pay a part of the wages of righteousness. It is much cheaper to lavish their sympathies on the children of Africa, the slaves of the colonies, and the bondmen of the United States. It costs them nothing, and furnishes an offset against oppression at home, similar to that of the pious devotee who stole a pig, and quieted his conscience by giving away the tail in charity

From these, and various other apt and ominous indications, it would not be treating the philanthropists of England a tithe as unkindly as they treat the United States, if we should assume, as we now do, that they are not alone actuated by pure benevolence in their course towards us in relation to the subject of slavery. It is believed that it has been taken up, and invested with imaginary horrors, in a great measure, if not solely, from a feeling of hostility to our country. The statesmen of England have discovered that this is our weak point; that the excitement of its agitation is imminently dangerous to the union of the states; and that, with a little art and a vast deal of declamation, it may be so presented to the ignorant

people of England as to cause them to hug themselves in a fool's paradise, by contrasting their superior freedom with the bondage of the slave of the United States. If, aided by the efforts of foreign missionaries, and reinforced by incendiaries of native growth, they succeed in producing civil dissension and a final rupture of the confederacy, the object will be gained. The cry will resound through the universe, that the great experiment of self-government has failed, and nothing will be left to mankind but a return to their allegiance to the divine right of kings, the equally divine right of the church, and the scarcely less divine rights of the aristocracy. Hence it is, that the negro bondman of the United States is now presented to the contemplation of mankind, in the publications and pictures of the philanthropists of England, and their humble followers in this country, loaded with chains, and crying out in an agony of despair, "AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER?" while his master is invested with the dignified office of his executioner. The real nature of his situation; the social and domestic relations subsisting between him and his master; the comforts and immunities he enjoys; the duties required of him in return; the obvious interest of his owner to treat him well, that he may perform

those duties, and the evidence afforded in his rapid increase that he is well treated: all these mitigating circumstances, which would gladden the heart of the true philanthropist, are kept out of view for the purpose of aggravating the sum of human misery, and throwing unmerited obloquy on millions of innocent people.

We say innocent people, because slavery in the United States, whatever may be its influence on the happiness of mankind, is not the product of this soil of liberty. It is not our work. It is not the offspring of our independence. It is the bantling laid at our doors by its mother, England. And here seems to be the proper place to enter on the inquiry, how far its existence, past, present, or future, can justly call down on our heads the denunciations of philanthropy. What have we done, that we should be stigmatized as "man-stealers, scourgers, and murderers of slaves?" or in the decorous language of Mr. O'Connell, "traitors and blasphemers," "two-legged wolves," "American wolves," "monsters in human shape, who boast of their liberty and humanity, while they carry the hearts of tigers within them."

We have no design, either here or elsewhere, to apologize for the existence of slavery in the United States. That it has become a great political

evil may be very possible ; but it is the treatment of the disease, not the disease itself, which renders it dangerous to the life of the patient. All that is necessary to render it perfectly harmless, is to let it alone. That it is a great moral evil, or that its existence or continuance detracts one tittle, one atom from the happiness of the slaves, our own experience and observation directly contradict. We believe them to be quite as happy as any race of hirelings in the world, and shall produce, in due time, our reasons for the belief. We therefore do not think that the United States, or the states of the South, or the holders of slaves in any portion of this Union, require any apology. It would be little short of an insult. As a matter of history, however, a short detail of the origin and progress of the institution of slavery in this country, seems naturally to associate itself with our subject.

History informs us that the first African slaves brought into the English colonies of North America, came to Jamestown, Virginia, in a Dutch vessel. From the first settlement of the first colony, the free importation of slaves was permitted by the mother country. It is on record, that the colonial assembly of Virginia, at a time when the nations of Europe possessing colonies in southern latitudes authorized the importation of slaves from Africa, passed several laws to prohibit such importation

into her limits, and that the King of England constantly withheld his assent to them. When the people of Virginia, on the 29th of June, 1776, declared the government as exercised under the crown of Great Britain totally dissolved, one of the grievances complained of against the British king, was his "*prompting the negroes to rise in arms against us, those very negroes whom, by an inhuman use of his prerogative, he has refused us permission to exclude by law.*" That this complaint of the interposition of the royal negative was sincere, is attested by subsequent legislation. Only two years before the new form of government went into operation, and while the infant states, and especially the state of Virginia, were deeply engaged in the struggle for independence, the general assembly passed a law prohibiting the further importation of slaves into the commonwealth. Every slave imported contrary to the act, it was declared, should, on such importation, become free, and a very heavy penalty was imposed on the importer.* We have not the means of ascertaining whether any other of the southern colonies followed the example of Virginia, in prohibiting the importation of slaves.† If they did not, the omission

* Henning's Statutes, vol. ix, p. 471 ; vol. xii, p. 182.

† Dr. Madden, in his late work on the West Indies, states that the continuance of the slave trade was first objected to by South Carolina.

cannot be urged against them as a reproach, since they were assured that the same exercise of the king's negative would be resorted to for the purpose of arresting the operation of the law.

The constitution of the United States, which went into operation shortly after the importation of slaves was prohibited by Virginia, contained a provision, that the importation of such persons as any of the states then existing might think proper to admit, should not be prohibited by congress prior to the year 1808. No slaves were imported into Virginia under this provision; on the contrary, the general assembly in 1793 passed a law prohibiting such importation under new and aggravated penalties.* Here, then, is one great state exonerated from the maledictions of the philanthropists, so far as respects all voluntary agency in the introduction of slaves into the United States.

With regard to the sister states of the South, at whose instance, it is believed, the clause in the constitution permitting the importation of slaves until the year 1808 was introduced, thus much may be said. It is well known how jealous the states were of their rights under the act of confederation, and with what sagacious vigilance they watched those provisions of the constitution which

* Acts of 1793, p. 8.

interfered with them. The southern states, with the exception of Virginia, which, as before stated, had voluntarily divested herself of the right, all enjoyed the privilege of importing slaves ; and, without doubt, much of their unwillingness to surrender it, originated in the great general principle, never to relinquish to the federal government a single right not indispensable to the exercise of the powers necessary to the performance of its functions. Such was the right of importing slaves. But setting all this aside, what is the charge that can justly be brought against them ? The importation of slaves was at that time common to England, France, Spain, Holland, and every other nation possessing colonies, where their labour was deemed essential to the raising of tropical products. The learned theologians of the school of emancipation had not yet discovered their favourite dogma, and the slave trade was one of the ordinary branches of commerce. The city of Bristol, in England, was the great mart. These young states, therefore, only followed the example of their elders, and for this, most certainly they may be held excusable, if any excuse is necessary.

Of the charge of introducing slaves into Florida, and that vast region comprehended under the general name of Louisiana, the people of the United

States are entirely innocent. It cannot be ascribed to them or their government. It was done while the country was possessed by the Spaniards and French, and the right to the property of slaves was guarantied by the act of cession from France to the United States. Since that period, the state of Missouri was admitted into the Union, with the right of holding slaves, after a struggle which threatened the dissolution of the confederacy. In addition to this, the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama, which were not within the limits of Louisiana, have chosen to recognise the institution of slavery simply for the reason that the settlers were emigrants from slave-holding states, and brought their slaves with them. Still further; in order that slavery may be restricted to the region which it was supposed could not be cultivated without the aid of Africans or their descendants, a solemn compact was made, excluding it for ever beyond a certain northern latitude.

Let us now sum up the real state of the case in as few words as possible. Slavery was first introduced into the colonies now composing a portion of the United States, by the authority of the mother country, England, and in opposition to the laws of one colony at least. It was recognised by the United States, in their independent char-

acter, both from interest and necessity. They found the slaves on their hands, and did not choose to share their newly acquired freedom with an ignorant race, incapable of appreciating or enjoying its blessings, and who had taken no part in acquiring them. On the very first instant of the expiration of the time during which the general government was restricted by the constitution from all action on the subject, congress passed a law prohibiting the slave trade. In doing this, the United States set the first example to the world. While Mr. Wilberforce was reiterating his annual motion in the British parliament for the abolition of the slave trade, while England, France, Spain, Portugal, Holland, and every nation holding southern colonies, continued to legalize this traffic, the United States alone stood exonerated from all participation. The first impulse, and the first example, came from this country, which is held up to the bitterest animadversion of those who now, for purposes previously indicated, usurp the lead in the race of philanthropy; and like all new converts, make up for their tardiness by noisy and obtrusive impertinence. Add to this, that slavery has been voluntarily abolished in all the old states where it was practicable without producing dangerous consequences, and as voluntarily prohibited by several of the new ones.

What then have the United States done to be thus singled out from the rest of the world as a target for the great guns of philanthropy? They tolerated the slave trade not a moment after the constitution permitted them to abolish it; they have refused to allow the British cruisers to board and search their vessels under pretence of suppressing that trade—a privilege that would revive and sanction the antiquated claim of England which occasioned the late war; and the people of the South have declined to yield to the seductive anathemas of English and American abolitionists, and let loose upon themselves millions of ignorant, helpless slaves, to become either a burden or a curse to their masters. Last, and worst of all, they have rejected the honour of mingling their blood with that of their slaves, and debasing their species by the favourite process of amalgamation. Such are the enormous offences against the law of God, the rights of nature, and the feelings of humanity, which it seems have merited the names of “traitors and blasphemers,” “two-legged wolves,” “monsters in human shape,” and other similar compliments.

All that the people of the United States could constitutionally do—all that they were called upon by any principle of humanity to do—they have done. They are now vehemently reproached for

not doing what neither reason nor humanity require at their hands. Because the government of England has thought proper to coerce her dependant colonies into a prospective manumission of their slaves, the government of the United States must do the same to independent states constituting nearly one half of this confederation, and whose right to this species of property was the condition on which they consented to enter the Union. The cases are distinct in every material feature. The obstacles in one were overcome by a sheer act of arbitrary legislation, such as in the other is utterly impracticable; and if it were attempted, would be resisted to the last.

If England and the English press were to call on France, Spain, or Portugal to give immediate freedom to the slaves of their colonies, there might be some ground of reproach if they refused, because they have the power to do what is demanded of them. Their domination over their dependancies is even more despotic than that of England over hers, and therefore nothing but the will is wanting. But the one-sided philanthropists of that country make no such requisition on the philanthropy of those states. The British government is content to make treaties conceding the right of search and detention to its cruisers in all *suspicious* cases, and thus virtually investing her with a prerogative

which the United States always has, and, it is hoped, always will resist, when attempted under any pretence whatever. Yet we do not find these intermeddlers in our domestic concerns denouncing France, Spain, and Portugal in such terms as they apply to the United States, who first set the example of prohibiting the slave trade to the rest of the world. They hold meetings in London, attended by leading statesmen of all parties, to make speeches against us, and denounce the Colonization Society, one of the most rationally benevolent institutions ever formed for the propagation of Christianity and civilization in Africa, and thus laying the axe to the root of slavery. But we do not find them sending fugitives from justice to those countries to invite the slaves to insurrection and murder, or provoke a servile war; neither does the whole press of England join in one general chorus of cant against them for declining to inflict ruin on a large portion of their subjects. The reason is sufficiently obvious. They are not free republics, and the example of their growth and prosperity, under a system of equal rights and equal laws, presents nothing to induce the subjects of England to an imitation of their institutions or an abandonment of their country.

That the late intemperate proceedings of the abolitionists have been stimulated by an impulse

derived from abroad, is evident from the whole history of their newborn zeal. It will be remembered that the denunciation of the Colonization Society, which was the first step in their proceedings, was at a meeting in the city of London, at which very distinguished statesmen of all parties attended, and in which the two great liberators, Garrison and O'Connell, equally distinguished themselves by their abuse of the people of the United States. From that meeting the emissaries of the English abolitionists came, red hot with furious zeal, to light the fires of contention, insurrection, disunion, and massacre. We feel no hesitation in declaring our belief that they are not only stimulated by foreign influence, but by foreign money; because it is otherwise incomprehensible how they obtain the means of gratuitously distributing so many papers, pamphlets, and pictures, or of supporting such a number of brawling incendiaries who are every day disturbing the peace of communities by their disgusting and inflammatory harangues. The notorious Thompson, whose regard to the rights of property was so admirably demonstrated in London as to point him out emphatically as a proper instrument for assailing them here, is known to be a missionary from a society of venerable spinsters. It is understood that he has gone to England to procure testimoni-

als to his character, and doubtless he will succeed ; for there are many honest zealots there, who will think a few pious frauds not only justifiable, but praiseworthy on such an occasion.

If we combine with these circumstances, the tone and language of the British press—reviews, magazines, and newspapers ; the public declarations of her statesmen and orators ; the voice of the pulpit ; the resolutions of public meetings ; and the officious intermeddling of a host of travellers, from Abdy, the master of arts, to Reed and Matthison, the doctors of divinity, it would seem sufficiently evident that a great concentrated effort is making against the good name and well being of the United States. That it has its origin deep in political feelings and motives, enough has been adduced to render more than probable ; and speaking, we trust, without any undue degree of presumption, it might be well for England to consider whether an enlarged and liberal policy towards the United States, a great and growing confederation, which not all the arts of foreign or domestic influence can rend asunder, at least for centuries to come, would not prove ultimately more judicious, than that which she now seems to be pursuing. We inherit her blood, her feelings, her policy, her courage, her talents, and more than her enterprise ; and she must know by this time that

we are no despicable enemy. It might, therefore, be worth while to calculate the value of our friendship. The people of the United States are of a nature to forgive injuries, but they never forget insults. Every man among them reads English, and, of consequence, every slanderous or contemptuous ebullition of the British press tells in this country. It is not that we think more of the opinions of Englishmen than of other foreigners, but that those opinions are infinitely more accessible, being conveyed in our native tongue, and circulated everywhere without the necessity of a translation.

The efforts of the whole world cannot dissever this Union. Our quarrels are those of man and wife, and all that is wanting to produce not only a cordial reconciliation but a unity of action is the interference of a third person. Every sentiment of patriotism and love of glory; every dictate of reason; every tie of interest; and every impulse that operates with irresistible force and fervour on the hearts and heads of a generous, spirited, and enlightened people, concentrate themselves in one effort to preserve and perpetuate that government and that union which every man is conscious are the main pillars of his happiness and prosperity. It may be shaken at times, but the edifice will not fall; it will only acquire additional solidity by the

parts becoming more compact as the conflicting elements settle down in their proper places. The desire of happiness ; the love of glory ; the recollections of the past ; the realities of the present ; and the towering hopes of the future, constitute the cement of this confederation, and promise a duration only to be arrested by those silent yet irresistible changes which constitute the invisible instruments of Providence in governing the world.

Let not any peevish jealousy, or recollection of past times, operate on England to forget her best interests in the indulgence of her worst passions. The United States and England, as friends, may stand against the world ; as foes, they will only become the prey of each other. But friends we can never be, while every one of the thousand ships that carry on the intercourse of the two countries, comes freighted with calumnies, or exaggerations that amount to calumnies, and there is not a wind that blows from the east but is tainted with the spirit of never dying hostility. The fires that were lighted up by two wars will never be extinguished, so long as fresh fuel is thus every day administered. The press of England, not less than the conflicting claims and interests of the two nations, has already contributed to produce one war, and while it perseveres in its hostility, the seeds of war will continue to vegetate to maturity.

As little will the United States be dismembered as conciliated, by bitter denunciations launched forth from behind the brazen shield of universal philanthropy.

These sentiments are those of every native born citizen of the United States, whatever may be the party he espouses, or the state to which he belongs. It is firmly believed that there is not an advocate of nullification, as it is usually termed, who would not, if the country were in danger, emulate the patriotism which inspired Marion, Sumpter, Pickens, the Rutledges and Pinckneys of yore, when they converted the solitudes of nature into the temples of freedom, and swamps into impregnable fortresses. The sentiment of patriotism and the love of liberty are equally indelible in the hearts of our people; each man feels himself a full sharer in the benefits of a mild and equal government; an inheritor of all she is, all she is destined to become hereafter. It is a joint stock company; and such is the feeling of a common interest which pervades the minds of all, that neither England nor any other power under heaven will gain anything but the eternal enmity of the people of the United States, by attempts to wound their good name, or scatter the firebrands of dissension and disunion among them.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Laws for the Government of Slaves.

ALL those who have written on the subject of slavery, and the advocates of immediate abolition most especially, have endeavoured to impose on the world an opinion that the slaves of the United States are entirely without the protection of the laws, and completely at the mercy of the will, the caprice, or the cruelty of their masters. With a view to dispel this delusion, and to enable the reader to estimate correctly their real situation, we give the following abstract of the laws of Virginia, furnished by a gentleman of the bar in that state, whose character and attainments are such as entitle him to unqualified belief in his statements. Originating, as they do, in a state of society common to all the South, it is presumed no material difference will be found between the regulations adopted for the same general purposes in other quarters.

Being property, slaves may be bought and sold by persons capable of buying and selling other

property. In relation, however, to free negroes and mulattoes, there is this qualification: that no free negro or mulatto shall be capable of purchasing or otherwise acquiring permanent ownership (except by descent) in any slave other than his or her husband, wife, or children.

They are held to be personal estate,* and as such may be levied upon and sold for the debts of the owner. But these qualifications exist. No collector of taxes, levies, fines, forfeitures, amercements, or poor-rates, or officers' fees, is allowed to distrain upon slaves for the purpose of satisfying any such dues, if other sufficient distress can be had.† So in relation to executions. No officer is allowed to take slaves in execution for a debt of small amount, when other sufficient goods are shown to him.‡ When taken, however, under execution and attachment, the officer is required to support them until sold or discharged, for which an allowance is made him not exceeding twenty cents per day for each slave.§

Upon the death of the owner, his personal representative is inhibited from selling the slaves, unless the other part of the personal estate (regard

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 431, § 47.

† *Ibid.* p. 282, § 25.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 532, § 21.

§ *Ibid.* p. 533, § 24; p. 480, § 18.

being had to the privilege of specific legacies) shall be insufficient to pay the debts and expenses ; and then only so many of the slaves are sold as will be sufficient to satisfy the debts and expenses. The residue are reserved in kind for the legatees or distributees.* Sometimes there are so few slaves, and so many distributees, that an equal division thereof cannot be made in kind. In such case, a court of chancery for the purpose of division may direct a sale of the slaves and a distribution of the proceeds according to the rights of the parties.†

The kind of labour to be performed by the slave for his master and its extent, are regulated by the master. The master, however, is liable to a penalty if he employ his slaves on a Sabbath day, except it be in the ordinary household offices of daily occurrence, or other work of necessity or charity.‡ So, too, in relation to food and clothing. The kind and quality of each which the master is to furnish, depends generally upon himself. Where the slave is one capable of labour, and the master is deriving benefit from his work, the interest of the master and public opinion combined, generally furnish an adequate guarantee that what is reasonably sufficient will be provided. Humanity and sound policy,

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 387, § 49.

† *Ibid.* p. 432, § 50.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 555, § 5.

however, have dictated a provision for that class who are of no service to their masters. It is enacted that every master or owner of a slave of unsound mind, or aged, or infirm, who shall permit such slave to go at large without adequate provision for his or her support, so that such slave must be dependant on charity, trespass, or theft for support, shall pay a fine for every such offence; and it is, moreover, the duty of the overseers of the poor of any county or corporation where such slave shall be found, to provide for the maintenance of every such slave; to charge the master or owner with a sum, quarterly or annually, sufficient for that purpose, and to recover the same by motion.*.

Since 1788, the life of the slave has been protected by the laws equally with that of the freeman;† and the statutes against maiming extend as well to the protection of the bond as the free. In 1811, it was decided by the superior criminal court, that the statute against stabbing would sustain an indictment for stabbing a slave as well as a freeman.‡ A similar question was before the court in 1827, upon an indictment for shooting a slave and decided the same way.§ The court held

* Sup. Rev. Code, p. 236, § 3. † Hen. Stat. vol. xii. p. 681.

‡ *Com. vs. Chapple*, 1 Va. Cases, p. 184.

§ *Com. vs. Carver*, 5 Rand. 660.

that the act was intended to protect slaves as well as free persons, and the same punishment should be inflicted for unlawfully shooting or stabbing a person in one class as in the other.

Whether the slave is protected against minor injuries from the hand of the master, has been a question in Virginia of much doubt and difficulty. On one occasion, a master was indicted in a circuit court, and by the judgment of that court punished by fine and imprisonment for the immoderate, cruel, and excessive beating of his own slave.* A subsequent case was carried before the supreme criminal court in 1827, and that court was of opinion that the common law could not operate upon slavery, which was a condition wholly new to it, and that no act of the legislature having been made for the punishment of the offence, the indictment could not be sustained. In the conclusion of its opinion, the court say, "It is greatly to be deplored that an offence so odious and revolting as this, should exist to the reproach of humanity. Whether it may be wiser to correct it by legislative enactments, or leave it to the tribunal of public opinion, which will not fail to award to the offender its deep and solemn reprobation, is a question of great delicacy and doubt. This court has little hesita-

* 5 Rand. p. 697.

tion in saying that the power of correction does not belong to it."*

No master or owner of a slave can license such slave to go at large, and trade as a freeman.† It is expressly declared unlawful to give a slave permission to procure ardent spirits, and sell, barter, or trade with the same.‡ A person who has obtained a license to exhibit a public show, or to vend articles as a hawker or pedler, cannot authorize a negro or mulatto to exhibit or vend in his stead.§ And no one can permit his slave, or a slave hired by him, to go at large and hire himself out.||

No person is allowed to buy or receive from, or sell to a slave, any commodity, without the consent of his master, overseer, or employer; and the penalty is greater when the dealing is on the Sabbath day.¶ A specific penalty is provided for selling ardent spirits to a slave without the consent of his master, overseer, or employer.** Further penalties are imposed on the master or skipper of

* *Com. vs. Turner*, 5 Rand. 686.

† Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 442, § 81.

‡ Sup. Rev. Code, p. 250, § 5.

§ Sess. Acts 1833-4. p. 14, § 23.

|| Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 442, § 81, 82.

¶ *Ibid.* p. 426, § 19, 20; Sup. p. 250, § 2.

** Sup. Rev. Code, p. 250, § 4.

a vessel who shall deal with a slave without the consent of the master or overseer, or who shall permit any slave to come on board his vessel without such consent.*

A slave is not allowed to keep or carry any weapon.† And according to the letter of the statute, he cannot go from the tenement of his master, or other person with whom he lives, without a pass, or something to show that he is proceeding by authority from his master, employer, or overseer;‡ but this statute has never been strictly enforced.

If any negro or mulatto, bond or free, furnish a pass or permit to any slave, without the consent of the master, employer, or overseer of such slave, he may be punished by stripes, not exceeding thirty-nine, at the discretion of a magistrate. The terms of the statute are rather stronger where the act done is with intent to aid the slave to abscond from his owner or possessor.§ To guard against the consequences of allowing slaves to write passes, it has within a few years past been enacted, that if any white person, for pay or compensation, shall assemble with any slaves for the purpose of teaching, and shall teach any slave to read or

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 453, § 83, 84.

† *Ibid.* p. 423, § 7, 8; Sup. p. 246, § 4.

‡ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 422, § 6.

§ *Ibid.* p. 423, § 6; Sup. p. 80, § 8.

write, such person, or any white person contracting with such teacher so to act, shall be liable to a fine.*

In connection with, and introductory to what will be said touching the religious exercises of the slaves, a curious ancient statute, passed in 1667, may be mentioned. It recites, that some doubts had arisen whether children that were slaves by birth, and by the piety of their owners became partakers of the sacrament of baptism, should by virtue of their baptism be made free; and then proceeds to declare that the conferring of baptism doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom, to the end that masters, freed from this doubt, may more carefully endeavour the propagation of Christianity, by permitting children, though slaves, or those of greater growth, if capable, to be admitted to that sacrament.†

There is nothing now in the laws of Virginia to prevent the assembling of the slaves of any one owner or master together at any time for religious devotion; nothing to deprive masters or owners of slaves of the right to employ any free white person whom they may think proper to give religious instruction to their slaves; nothing to prevent any ordained or licensed white minister of the Gospel, or

* Sup. Rev. Code, p. 245, § 6.

† Hen. Stat. vol. ii. p. 260; vol. iii. p. 460.

any layman licensed for that purpose by the denomination to which he may belong, from preaching or giving religious instruction to slaves in the daytime ; and nothing to prevent the masters or owners of slaves from carrying, or permitting any such slave to go with them, or with any part of their white family, to any place of religious worship conducted by a white minister, in the nighttime.*

The inhibitions relating to this subject are these : that a slave shall not attend any preaching in the nighttime, although conducted by a white minister, without a written permission from his owner, overseer, or master, or the agent of one of them ; that no slave, free negro, or mulatto shall preach, or exhort, or hold any meeting, either in the day or at night ; and that no slave, free negro, or mulatto shall attend any assembly held, or pretended to be held, for religious purposes or other instruction, conducted by any slave, free negro, or mulatto preacher.†

These inhibitions grow out of the same policy which had previously produced the law declaring that all assemblages of slaves or free negroes or mulattoes with slaves, at any meetinghouse, or other place in the night, or at any school for teaching them reading or writing, either in the day or night, should be considered unlawful assemblies,

Sup. Rev. Code, p. 246, § 1, 2,

† *Ibid*,

and might be dispersed by a warrant from a justice of the peace.*

When a slave is apprehended for any crime not punishable with death or dismemberment, he may be let to bail; and though the crime be so punishable, yet if only a like suspicion of guilt fall on him, he is in like manner bailable.†

Any negro or mulatto, bond or free, is a good witness in pleas of the commonwealth for or against negroes or mulattoes, bond or free, or in civil cases where free negroes or mulattoes shall alone be parties.‡

For a great variety of offences, slaves are punishable by stripes at the discretion of a justice of the peace, not exceeding thirty-nine. They may be so punished for disposing of spirituous liquors at or within one mile of any muster, preaching, or other public assembly of black or white persons;§ for secretly harbouring a slave without the consent of his master or overseer;|| for riots, routs, and unlawful assemblies, trespasses, and seditious speeches;¶ for using abusive and provoking language to a white person, or for lifting their

* Rev. Code, vol. i, pp. 424, 5, § 15, 16.

† Sess. Acts 1834-5, p. 45.

‡ Rev. Code, v. i. p. 422, § 5.

§ Sup. Rev. Code, p. 247, § 5.

|| Rev. Code, v. i. p. 439, § 59.

¶ *Ibid.* p. 423, § 12; Sess. Acts 1834-5, p. 52.

hands against such person except in defence;* for writing or printing, or causing to be written and printed, any book, pamphlet, or other writing, advising persons of colour within this state to make insurrection or to rebel, or for knowingly circulating or causing to be circulated any such book, pamphlet, or writing;† for the larceny of any money, bank note, goods, chattels, or other thing of the value of twenty dollars or less;‡ for buying or receiving any stolen goods, bank note, or other paper of value, knowing the same to be stolen;§ and for negligently setting fire to any wood, fence, field, or anything capable of spreading fire, and thereby injuring another.|| Many of the offences here enumerated, if committed by a white person, would be punished by confinement in the penitentiary for a long term.

When a negro or mulatto is found, upon due proof made to any county or corporation court, to have given false testimony, he may be ordered by the court to have both ears nailed to the pillory and cut off, and receive thirty-nine lashes, or such other punishment as the court shall think proper, not extending to life or limb.¶

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 426, § 22.

† Sup. Rev. Code, p. 247, § 7.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 242, § 5.

§ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 589, § 9; Sup. p. 244, § 3.

|| Sess. Acts 1834-5, pp. 46 et 65, § 2.

¶ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 431, § 46.

After a slave has been found guilty of hog-stealing, and punished with stripes, if he be convicted a second time, he may be ordered to stand in the pillory, and have his ears nailed thereto and cut off.*

If a slave maliciously set fire to any woods, fence, field of grass, straw, hay, or other such thing capable of taking and spreading fire on lands, or aid and abet therein, he is guilty of felony, but will have the benefit of clergy.† If a slave maliciously set fire to any barn, stable, cornhouse, or other house, he is guilty of felony; but if the injury done by the offence does not exceed fifty dollars, he will have the benefit of clergy.‡ So, if a slave maliciously set fire to any stack or cock of wheat, barley, oats, corn, or other grain, or to any stack or cock of hay, straw, or fodder, he is guilty of felony; but unless injury be done to the value of fifty dollars, he will have the benefit of clergy.§ For an offence within the benefit of clergy, the slave is burned in the hand by the jailer in open court, and suffers such corporal punishment as the court think fit to inflict.||

The next class of offences embraces those for which a slave may be sentenced to death, but for

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 574, § 2 † Sess. Acts 1834-5, p. 46.

‡ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 588, § 5; Sup. p. 244

§ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 588, § 6; Sup. p. 244.

|| Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 431, § 45.

which the sentence is never carried into execution. Forgeries,* horse-stealing,† and feloniously breaking any warehouse or storehouse, and taking therefrom property of the value of four dollars or more,‡ come within this class. What is substituted for the punishment of death will presently be shown.

The justices of every county or corporation are justices of oyer and terminer for trying slaves charged with felony. These trials are by five at least, without juries, upon legal evidence, at such times as the sheriffs or other officers shall appoint; not being less than five, or more than ten days after the offender shall have been committed to jail.§ No person having any interest in the slave can sit upon his trial.|| The court assign counsel to the slave, who is heard in his defence; and the fee of counsel is fixed by the justices, and paid by the owner. For good cause shown, the court may adjourn from time to time, but the trial cannot be delayed, unless by the application of the prisoner, beyond the third term after the commitment; and when the trial comes on, the slave is not condemned in any case, unless all of the justices sitting on his trial agree in opinion that he is guilty.¶

* Rev. Code, vol i. p. 581; Sess. Acts 1834-5, p. 47.

† Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 575.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 588, § 7.

§ *Ibid.* p. 428, § 32.

|| *Ibid.* p. 431, § 43.

¶ *Ibid.* pp. 431, 2, § 32 to 35.

It was formerly sufficient that four of the court, being a majority, should concur in opinion,* but the act of 1786 required that all of the justices sitting should agree,† and so the law has since remained. This necessity of unanimity on the part of those who are to determine the law as well as the fact, gives to the slave an advantage over a white person. In a court called for the examination of a white person, the decision of a majority of that court against the accused will avail as much as their unanimous opinion. So in a prosecution against a white person, if a question of law be carried to the supreme criminal tribunal, the decision of the question by a majority of that court will govern. The unanimity in the justices sitting for the trial of a slave, has been fixed by analogy to the unanimity required in a jury for the trial of a white person. But the slave has still an advantage in this. If eleven jurors think the prisoner guilty and one thinks otherwise, the effect is simply to give the accused another chance before a new jury. Whereas if four justices are against the slave and one for him, he is entirely acquitted.

If judgment of death be passed upon the slave, the law declares there shall be thirty days at least

* Hen. Stat, vol. viii. p. 523.

† *Ibid.*, vol. xii. p. 345.

between the time of passing judgment and the day of execution, except in cases of conspiracy, insurrection, or rebellion.* And in all cases where a slave is tried and convicted of any crime which may affect life, the court before which the trial is had, is directed to cause the testimony for and against every such slave to be entered on record, and a copy of the whole proceedings to be transmitted forthwith to the executive.†

The governor is vested with the executive power, and has a general authority to grant reprieves and pardons.‡ There is besides a special power in the executive to sell slaves under sentence of death, and take bond from the purchasers conditioned for carrying such slaves out of the United States.§ The sale amounts to a reprieve from the sentence of death. In this way the punishment of death is constantly commuted, where that punishment is deemed too severe for the offence of which the slave is convicted.

Many offences remain to be enumerated where the sentence of the court would be death. That sentence is pronounced upon a slave for maliciously setting fire to any barn, stable, cornhouse, or other

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 429, § 32. † *Ibid.* p. 430, § 40.

‡ Am. Cons. art. iv. § 4. § Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 430, § 39.

house, or to any stack of wheat or other grain, or to any stack of hay, straw, or fodder, where injury is actually sustained by any such fire to the value of fifty dollars.*

For maliciously assaulting and beating any white person, with intention, in so doing, to kill such white person.†

For an attempt to ravish a white woman.‡

For a rape actually committed.§

For preparing and administering poisonous medicines with intent to murder.||

For consulting, plotting, and conspiring to rebel or make insurrection, or to murder any white person;¶ and

After conviction of the offence of writing, printing, or causing to be written or printed, any book, pamphlet, or other writing, advising persons of colour within this state to make insurrection, or to rebel, or the offence of knowingly circulating or causing to be circulated any such book, pamphlet, or writing, for committing any such offence a second time.**

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 598, § 5, 6; Sup. p. 244.

† Sup. Rev. Code, p. 247, § 6.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 281, § 3.

§ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 585.

|| Hen. Stat. vol. vi. p. 105, § 3; 1 R. C. p. 427, § 25, 6, 7.

¶ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 427, § 23.

** Sup. p. 247; § 7.

In many of the cases which have been just mentioned, the sentence would probably be commuted; in others not.

The value of a slave condemned to die, who shall suffer accordingly, or before execution of the sentence, perish, escape, or be sold for transportation by the executive, is estimated by the justices triers, and paid by the commonwealth to the owner.*

While the state of Virginia has punished those slaves who have violated her laws, even at a charge upon herself to the amount of their value, she has not forgotten those who have rendered her essential service. As early as 1710 an act was passed, reciting that a negro slave named Will, belonging to Robert Ruffin of the county of Surry, was signally serviceable in discovering a conspiracy of negroes, and declaring, that as a reward for his fidelity, and to encourage such services, the said negro Will should be for ever free from his slavery, and should inhabit within the colony of Virginia if he should think fit to continue therein; and the value of the slave was directed to be paid to the owner out of the public money.†

In 1779 an act passed, reciting that a negro

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 430, § 37, 41.

† Hen. Stat. vol. iii. p. 537.

slave named Kitt, the property of Hinchia Mabry of the county of Brunswick, had rendered meritorious service in making the first discovery of several persons concerned in counterfeiting money; and it was declared that Kitt should be set free and the treasurer was required to make full compensation to his owner for him.*

In 1783 an act passed, declaring that every slave who, by the direction of his owner, had enlisted in any regiment or corps raised in this state, either as continental or state establishment, and had been received as a substitute for any free person whose duty or lot it was to serve in such regiment or corps, and had served faithfully during the term of such enlistment, or had been discharged from such service by some officer duly authorized to grant such discharge, should be completely emancipated; and if any of the said persons should be detained in servitude, the attorney-general was required to commence proceedings in their behalf.†

By the same act, Aberdeen, a negro man slave, who had laboured a number of years in the public service at the lead mines, was emancipated.‡

In 1801 a law was passed, authorizing and re-

* Hen. Stat. vol. x. p. 115.

† *Ibid.* vol. xi. p. 308.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 309.

questing the governor to purchase and set free, on behalf of the commonwealth, Pharaoh, a slave, the property of Philip Sheppard, and Tom, a slave, the property of Elizabeth Sheppard, both of whom had rendered essential service.*

While thus much and perhaps more has been done by the commonwealth of Virginia, there is nothing to prevent individual emancipation. The general assembly has made it lawful for any person by his last will and testament, or by any other instrument in writing under his hand and seal, attested and proved or acknowledged in the mode prescribed, to emancipate and set free his slaves or any of them.† A slave thus emancipated cannot remain within the commonwealth as matter of right more than twelve months thereafter, unless an infant, and then not more than twelve months after attaining the age of twenty-one years.‡ But if the emancipation was for an act of extraordinary merit, upon proof to the county or corporation court of such act, and of the general good character and conduct of the applicant, permission may be granted him to remain within the commonwealth.§

A man who is in debt cannot give away his

* Sess. Acts 1800-1, p. 19. ch. 34.

† Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 433, § 53.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 436, § 61.

§ *Ibid.* p. 436, § 62.

property to the prejudice of his creditors. On the same principle slaves emancipated are liable to be taken by execution to satisfy any debt contracted by the person emancipating them, before such emancipation is made.* Yet where slaves are emancipated by will, and they are taken under execution to satisfy a debt of the testator, it has been decided that a sale of the persons emancipated may be prohibited, if the other estate of the testator be sufficient for the payment of his debts.†

So a widow, who renounces her husband's will and claims under the law, is entitled to one third of the slaves whereof her husband died possessed, notwithstanding they may be emancipated by his will. Yet if part of the slaves only be emancipated, the widow's part is taken out of those which are not set free, if there be enough to make one third of the whole number whereof the husband died possessed. Or where the personal estate of the husband, after payment of debts and expenses, is sufficient to compensate the widow for the value of her third part, the personal representative may make such compensation.‡

If the slaves emancipated be not, in the judgment

* Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 434, § 54.

† *Dunn vs. Amy, &c.* 1 Leigh, 465.

‡ Rev. Code, vol. i. p. 435. § 60.

of the proper court, of sound mind and body, or be too old or too young, then they are to be supported and maintained by the person so liberating them, or by his or her estate.*

Such is the code of laws for the government of the slaves of the South ; and it may confidently be asked, whether, when we consider the nature of the institution, and the necessity of providing for the security of property as well as life in times of high excitement, it exhibits any disposition on the part of the master to tyrannize over his slave ? Is it not, in its general features, far less severe than the law of England, with all her claims to philanthropy ? If night assemblages of slaves are prohibited in the southern states, are they not equally so in Ireland at this very moment, not under penalty of stripes, but death ? Are they not liable to be broken up by a military force exercising all the severities of martial law at discretion ? Is it not held felony in a person to possess arms ? Can any white man in England sell liquor, or exhibit public shows without a license, the omission to procure which is visited by severe penalties ? Is not perjury, forgery, setting fire to houses, barns, stables,

* Rev. Code, vol. i, p. 434, § 55.

and stacks of hay or corn, punished with death? and were not several persons hanged without benefit of clergy a few years since in the counties of Kent and Sussex for these offences? Is not preparing and administering poisons, committing a rape, conspiring against the government or against the person of the king, death by the law of England? Is not shooting a partridge or snaring a hare without license, stealing a loaf of bread, and various other venial trespasses, punished by transportation? And are not various crimes punished capitally in England, which, when committed here by slaves, are only visited with stripes, branding, and loss of ears? It is true there are some offences in the code of the South, which are not so by the law of England; but it is maintained, and the comparison challenged, that, take it as a whole, the former is more humane in principle, as well as practice, than the latter. Let England, then, look at home for the exercise of her philanthropy. Enough will be found to require all her labours in behalf of the rights of humanity. It may, indeed, be urged in reply to this, that the people of England have a voice in making these laws, and in repealing them should they be considered tyrannical or severe. In theory, they certainly have; but practically, by far the greater por-

tion of those on whom they operate most extensively, have no more agency in making or unmaking the laws than the slaves of the southern states.

Compared with the existing laws of many of the other states of the Union, the code of slavery unquestionably appears severe. The infliction of stripes, and other corporal punishments, is peculiarly unpalatable to the weak stomach of modern philanthropy, whose sympathies seem almost exclusively on the side of the transgressors of the statutes. It should be remembered, however, that it is within the memory of every citizen of New-York of the age of forty, that stripes for petty offences were inflicted at the discretion of the magistrates, and that the repeal of the law authorizing such punishments, originated in a popular clamour on account of a single instance of undue severity. In the state of Delaware, and, it is believed, in all, or nearly all the old states south of it, corporal punishments of white citizens form a portion of their criminal code, and are not confined to slaves.

This is not the place to inquire into the wisdom or humanity of substituting imprisonment for stripes, or branding, or even mutilation. Thus much, however, may be said on the subject, that beyond doubt the class of offences for which cor-

poral punishments were formerly inflicted has increased to a great extent ; that disgrace is no punishment to those who have lost the sense of shame ; that trifling imprisonment, accompanied by a liberal allowance of food, comfortable lodgings, and exemption from labour, afford but little security to society from the depredations of those who possess none of these comforts, and to whom idleness is the greatest of all luxuries. It might be well also to bear in mind, that to shut the head of a family from the world, is to make his wife and children, for the most part, dependant on society for support ; and that a sickly feeling of commiseration for guilt, when carried into the administration of the laws, is both unjust and dangerous to the innocent, because it removes one of the most effectual barriers to the commission of crime.

In estimating the laws for the government of slaves, it should not be forgotten, that the characteristic most universal in the natives of Africa and their descendants, is laziness. Merely to imprison them, so far from operating as a punishment, would be the most grateful of all indulgences, since it would afford them ample room for the gratification of their natural taste. Like many of the pupils of our court of quarter sessions, they would commit offences solely for the sake of passing a few

days, weeks, or months in a comfortable asylum, where they would, as a matter of course, receive board and lodging without the necessity of earning either. In the mean time the master would be losing his services, while under the obligation of maintaining the culprit. Hence a resort is had to corporal punishment, the only effectual mode of reaching the feelings of a race whose situation naturally places them out of the reach of those restraints and inflictions, which operate most effectually on those who have preserved the sense of honour and the safeguard of shame.

In all military systems, corporal punishments of some kind or other have been, and still are found necessary to the preservation of discipline ; and if we are not misinformed, in none are they inflicted with more severity than that of England. Both soldiers and sailors may be punished with a certain number of stripes, or by imprisonment for a limited period, and in various other ways, at the discretion of almost any petty officer. Apprentices, children, and school boys and girls, are in like manner subject to reasonable or unreasonable chastisement by stripes ; and the acknowledged gallantry of the present age has not yet signalized its devotion to the gentler sex, by a repeal of the old law which authorizes the husband to inflict a moderate chas-

tisement on his better half. Even captains of merchantmen have a discretionary power of punishment over their sailors.

It may, however, be urged, that in these cases we have a security against unnecessary, or wanton, or inhuman punishments, in the character of the officer, the responsibility of the magistrate, the interest of the mechanic in the services of his apprentices, the affection of the parent for his child, the husband for his wife, and the consequences that would result from any gross abuse of his authority by the teacher. So have we similar guaranties for the restraint and punishment of the abuse of the power of the master over his slave. Interchanging, as they do, the labours of the one for the benefits and protection of the other, it cannot but follow that some degree of reciprocal goodwill must grow up between them, and most especially on the part of the master. Men love what belongs to them. The tie of ownership is one of the strongest and most universal that operates on the affections of mankind. Our home is without its greatest attraction, unless it is our own. This sentiment extends to all inanimate property, to our farm, our house and its furniture, for all which we feel an habitual and cordial attachment. It is still stronger towards domestic animals belonging to us,

and yet more strong towards domestic slaves. We cherish and value our horses, our dogs, our cattle, and sheep, simply because they administer to our comfort, pride, convenience, amusement, or wealth. It is therefore contrary to the nature of man, unless that nature be radically depraved, or brutified by vicious indulgence, to feel any other than the kindest attachment to his slaves, unless they forfeit it by their own misconduct. It is a libel on human nature, equally at war with all experience of the heart of man, to assume, as a general principle, that he will wantonly abuse his power over that which is his own, or so far lose sight of his interest as to misuse, starve, or mutilate the being so necessary to his comfort and happiness. If he starves him he cannot work; if he maims him he loses his labour, and is obliged to pay the cost of his cure. He would gratify his passions at the expense of his interest. This, it is true, is sometimes done in all the relations of social life, and yet those relations are not to be considered as contrary to the law of God, because they are sometimes abused to bad purposes.

There is yet another and equally powerful restraint on the abuse of the power of the master over the slave—the restraint of public opinion, which may be said in this age, and most especially

in this country, to be the supreme law of the land. In the present state of that opinion, the man who should be known to inflict wanton and unnecessary punishment on a slave, or to stint him in the ordinary comforts of life, or subject him to rigid or unmerciful restraints in the enjoyment of his hours of freedom, would incur the odium of all his neighbours. He would be shut out from all social intercourse with his equals ; his inferiors would despise him ; and he would create a solitude around his estate. The whole community would rise up against him as a tyrant who had abused his power over one race, and brought indelible disgrace on another.

That there may be solitary examples of individual cruelty presented at rare intervals, is beyond a doubt. To deny it would be equivalent to asserting that men never abuse their power. But that the tales circulated by the abolitionists, equally vague as horrible, and in which neither time, place, nor names are specified, nor any clew given by which their truth may be tested, are true, or if true, in any, the slightest degree characteristic of the general treatment of the slaves of the South, our own experience unequivocally contradicts. In a residence of several years within the District of Columbia, and a pretty extensive course of travel

in some of the southern states, we never saw or heard of any such instances of cruelty. We saw no chains and heard no stripes. But we every day and every hour saw and heard the slaves joking, gambolling about, laughing with a hearty exuberance that could only come from the heart, and apparently as happy in their situation as any class of human beings in existence. If, then, Paley is right, when he lays it down as a principle that "there remains a presumption in favour of those conditions of life in which men generally appear most cheerful and contented," assuredly the white men of the United States have as little cause of triumph over the slave, as they have reason to lament his bondage.

This public sentiment to which allusion has been made as a bar to the oppression of the slave, is still more powerful in the South than in the other portions of the Union. They feel that they stand at the bar of the public, charged, however unjustly, with abusing a power which they have inherited in consequence of circumstances beyond their control; and every man is conscious that he is responsible in his conduct, not only for his own, but the reputation of the state to which he belongs. It is in consequence of this, as well

as from still more enlarged feelings of humanity, that all the more severe laws have become a dead letter, except in times of high public excitement from the apprehension of insurrection. In fact, they were, in a great measure, devised for these exigencies alone, and are not, nor ever have been, even partially enforced, except on such occasions. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the real character and operation of all codes depends on the spirit in which they are executed. It is believed there are few systems of laws now in existence, and which have not undergone a revision within the last half century, that do not still contain provisions which would appear barbarous if executed to the letter, and which remain, as it were, in abeyance, only to be revived in extreme cases. Such are many of the slave laws of the South, which, although not repealed because extraordinary circumstances may render it absolutely necessary to the preservation of the property and lives of the free citizens to revive them, are still at all other times a mere dead letter in the statute books.

Admitting, however, that there may be rare and solitary instances in which some brutal master has equally lost sight of his own interests as well as of the common feelings of humanity, and wan-

tonly oppressed his slave. Are there not, in the records of military and naval punishments, numerous instances of a tyrannical exercise of power? Are there not equally numerous cases in our marine courts, in which the captains of merchant vessels are tried and punished for maltreating sailors? Has the sacred seat of justice never been prostituted to the purposes of interest and iniquity? Has the magistrate no passions, prejudices, or moments of irritation, which are sometimes propitiated by the additional punishment of criminals. Are there not thousands of recorded instances of cruelty and oppression practised by masters on their apprentices and helpless dependants? And, still deeper stain to humanity! are not the courts of every civilized nation in Christendom continually polluted by the presence of wretches brought thither for the most outrageous violations of the persons of their wives and children? There, it is true, they occasionally receive their just reward; but it cannot be doubted that thousands and tens of thousands of cases equally flagrant will never be known, and never punished, at least in this world, until "the friends of the entire human race" shall take as much pains to find out and redress the wrongs of the white, as they have those of the black skin. Such examples are incidental to every mode, condition,

and relation of human life, and are not the result of any one in particular. They spring from the corruptions of the human heart, like all the crimes and sufferings of this world. To abolish any custom or institution, because it may be, or is abused, would be to make war on all laws, Divine and human; for all laws have been occasionally perverted from their great objects, and made the scourges, instead of the benefactors of mankind.

On the other hand, it will be seen by a reference to the abstract of laws for the government of the slave, that in some cases the law is more favourable to him than to his master. He cannot be convicted of felony, unless by a unanimous decision of his judges, whereas a majority is sufficient to condemn the white citizen. He cannot be executed until at least thirty days after his sentence, unless in time of insurrection or rebellion; and not before the testimony for and against him is placed on record, and a copy transmitted to the governor, who is invested with the power of pardoning and reprieving. The governor is also clothed with a special authority to sell slaves under sentence of death, taking bond that the purchaser shall remove them from the United States; and in various other cases the punishment may be commuted. Those who are resolutely bent on finding selfish motives

where those of humanity alone appear, may possibly attempt to trace those humane provisions to a regard for the property of the master, rather than for the life of the slave. But whatever may be the motive, no one will deny that the result is the same, or that the slave receives the benefit of these exceptions in his favour, as well as his master. To us, these laws distinctly exhibit the operation of a humane policy, desirous, as far as may be consistent with the safety of their institutions, to alleviate the condition of bondage by every means in their power. The more severe provisions of the law must be traced to the absolute necessity of the case: the more lenient ones to the influence of humanity. If it should be retorted, that this very necessity shows that the condition of society in which it originates is radically bad, our reply will be found in the following chapter. We have already, if we do not err, shown that the slave of the South is not altogether at the mercy of his master; that he has legal rights which protect him against punishment beyond a reasonable extent, much more effectually than the soldier or sailor; that he is, like every free citizen, under the protection of the law. The next chapter will be devoted to a comparison of the relative condition of the African slave in his own native land, as well

as in the southern states, and the hireling white servants, peasants, and day-labourers of various parts of the world. In so wide a range, it must be obvious, that only great and leading points of comparison or contrast can be referred to ; but sufficient it is hoped, will be exhibited to enable our readers to draw correct general conclusions.

P 2

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Domestic and Social relations between the Master and Slave in the United States, and of the relative condition of African Freeman; African Slaves in their Native Land; American Slaves; English Labourers; European Peasantry, and various Classes of White Men in the United States.

It is only from the outward condition of men, that men can judge of the happiness of each other. There are certain physical wants common to all mankind; some special necessities, that must be supplied, and are indispensable to human existence. Of these, all are equally qualified to form an estimate. There are other sources of enjoyment and suffering, which must be left to the Great Being who alone enters into the recesses of the heart, and detects its secret workings.

The most common error of mankind is, that of estimating the happiness of others by their own standard of enjoyment, not considering the old

proverb, that "One man's meat is another man's poison," and that the endless diversities of habits, character, feeling, intellect, taste, and physical organization, create similar varieties in the sources from whence happiness is derived. One thing, however, is certain, that though mankind differ in so many points, there is one on which they all think alike. They all agree that hunger, thirst, cold, and overtasked labour, are real substantial evils; that, in proportion as we are free from these, we enjoy life, and partake of happiness; and that, on the contrary, no diversity of habit, character, education, feeling, taste, or intellect, can reconcile us to either one or the other. There is not the same degree of unanimity or certainty with regard to the enjoyments and sufferings of the mind; neither is it possible to form an estimate of the happiness of any one from his station in life, the degree of knowledge or ignorance he may rise or sink into, or the wealth or power he may possess. We might be miserable in the situation of a man who is in fact happier than ourselves. In short, after all the flourishing harangues and declamations of sentimental philosophers and philanthropic Quixotes, all reasoning and all experience only bring us to the conclusion of Paley, that "All that can be said is, that there remains a presump-

tion in favour of those conditions of life in which men generally appear most cheerful and contented. For though the apparent happiness of mankind be not always a true measure of their real happiness, it is the best we have."

And this standard of happiness accords best with our ideas of a wise and beneficent Providence, because all experience brings to us the conviction, that the class of human beings which is by far the most numerous, namely, the labouring class, is the merriest and most cheerful, when possessed of the ordinary comforts of life, which, as before observed, are indispensable to human existence in a civilized state. It would ill accord with the attributes of the Supreme Being, to presume, that the exceeding small portion of mankind which is free from the necessity of labour, should enjoy greater happiness than the vast majority, and that without any claim to superior virtue, or perhaps superior intellect.

Of all the varieties of the human race and of human condition that have ever fallen under our observation, the African slave of the South best realizes the idea of happiness, according to the definition of Archdeacon Paley ; for he is, or rather was, a few years ago, the most light-hearted, sportive, dancing, laughing being in the world. It

will be seen in the letters which will presently be produced, that a great change has lately taken place in this respect, in consequence of the labours of the abolitionists to enlighten him to a proper sense of his miserable condition. This cheerful, contented disposition, will doubtless be ascribed by that over-zealous fraternity to ignorance. Be it so. That which destroys our happiness may be called knowledge, but can claim none of the honours of wisdom, whose sole office is to increase the happiness of mankind. In this respect, ignorance and wisdom often go hand in hand ; for nothing is more certain than that, if a portion of mankind were to become as enlightened as the angels, and yet be obliged to inhabit the earth, they would be the most wretched of all beings. So with the slaves of the South. Teach them to be happy, and let this be the extent of their wisdom ; for that knowledge which conduces to the happiness of freemen, is a curse to the slave.

All those who have visited the states in which slavery prevails, whatever may have been their previous impressions of the horrors of that condition, must have been struck with the uniform hilarity and cheerfulness which prevail among the blacks. Labouring generally in large numbers together, they partake of the influence which com-

panionship always exercises over man, the most social of all beings. In the meadows and harvest-fields they lighten their labours by songs, the measures of which accord with the strokes of the cradle and scythe; and in whatever employment they may be associated, they are always joking, quizzing, or bantering each other. The children enjoy a life of perfect ease, and are maintained, by the products of the land which belong to them and theirs. The parents, being freed from all anxiety or exertion for the present or future support of their offspring, are never beset by the gnawing cares of the free white man, whose whole life is one continued effort to provide for himself and his children. The aged and infirm are also taken care of by the master, either from the dictates of his own humanity, or the obligation imposed on him by the law. None of them ever become wretched paupers, a disgrace to their race and a burden on society; and if a philanthropist were to visit their quarters during one of their holydays, he might behold a picture of careless, thoughtless hilarity, which would neutralize much of his horror of that state, which, in every age and nation of the world, has been the lot of millions of human beings, of all shades and colours.

This may indeed be the "bliss of ignorance;"

but, whatever be its source, happiness is still happiness, all the world over. That knowledge which only makes us discontented with our situation, is not a possession to be coveted ; nor can any acquisition which diminishes our enjoyments be an object of envy or desire to a wise man. The situation of the slave will indeed be wretched, should the abolitionists succeed in implanting in his mind the same views and feelings which freemen entertain with respect to bondage. But it should be borne in mind, that the sense of degradation, and the impatience of restraint, which result from education and habit, are beyond the comprehension of those who have never known, or ever aspired to, any other condition of life. The error of those who insist on the miseries of the slave, consists in placing themselves, with all their experience of the enjoyments of personal liberty, in his situation, and then imagining what he feels from what they would suffer in his place.

In comparing the sources of happiness within the reach of a well-treated slave with those of a free white hireling, the disadvantages will not all be found on one side. If they were, it might impeach the justice of Providence ; for, let it be recollected, that millions of human beings are, and have been,

from the earliest periods of history, subjected to this state, without any fault of their own, so far as we know. Why, then, should they be more miserable, as a matter of necessity, than those who have escaped this fate without any merit of their own? We cannot bring our minds to such a conclusion, and shall proceed to give our reasons why we believe there is not that wide disparity in regard to the enjoyments of this world between the slave and the freeman, which has lately called forth such a burst of philanthropy.

In casting about for the great and universal motives and excitements to human action, at least in a state of civilization, we shall find that the two principal objects of the exertions of man are, first, to acquire the means of enabling him innocently to gratify that passion which is essential to the great scheme of Providence, and in the absence of which the world would be a lifeless desert; and, secondly, to guard against the usual consequences resulting from such gratification; in other words, to maintain his wife and children, and provide for their subsistence after his death.

Hence the first exertions of a free civilized man are devoted to preparing himself, by the habits of labour, the acquisition of a trade or profession of some kind or other, for acquiring the means of

marrying and settling down in life, without entailing distress on his wife and children; and the second, to save enough to support them in case he should be suddenly called away. There are exceptions to these universal motives of action, yet still it cannot be denied that a vast majority of civilized men come under the above description. Their whole lives are spent in qualifying and exerting themselves to sustain the relations of husband and father. For this their early childhood is subjected to the confinement and discipline of schools; for this their youth is consumed in the acquisition of a trade, or in the acquirement of that knowledge which is necessary to some profession or business; for this a great portion of grown-up men labour incessantly from manhood to old age, often, very often, without success, and always with a ceaseless anxiety, which robs those labours of their wholesome influence on body and mind—and, after all his cares, his industry, and economy, he dies, perhaps, leaving his children destitute of provision, to the mercy of the world, and the protection of Heaven.

Such is not the case with the bondmen of the South. The animal passions, as well as the domestic affections of the African, are known to be peculiarly powerful. When of age to marry, it is

his instinct to fall in love ; and as no apprehensions for the present or future support of his wife and family prevent the indulgence of his passion, he goes to his master, and asks permission to "have a family," as he terms it. If his conduct and character are deserving of such an indulgence, it is seldom or never denied. The master builds him a cabin, furnishes it with such homely comforts as use has made necessary, and he enters upon his new character as head of a family. He feels no anxiety about providing for the present or the future ; his master is bound, by interest as well as humanity, and the obligation to the laws, to support them during the life of the father, and take care of them when he is dead. Do not these advantages furnish a counterpoise to many of his real and imaginary grievances ? Does not this entire freedom from the most heavy burdens of the rest of mankind, those carking cares which distil gall into their cup, and make them slaves for life, without the benefit of slavery, explain to us why the slave laughs, dances, and sings, while the free white man so often carries wrinkles on his brow and despondency in his heart ?

The slave neither knows nor has ever known any other state of life, and to him custom has become a second nature. His mind revolves

calmly, and, if you please, sluggishly, within the unvarying circle of his wishes, hopes, and fears; the body in one round of labour and relaxation, to which long habit has given the same attraction that variety bestows on those who live alone for pleasure; and it is only by agitating the still current, or forcing it into a new channel, that discord, discontent, resentment, revenge, and all their deplorable consequences, are produced. It is easy to persuade the ignorant that they ought to be miserable; and it is not more difficult to render them so, by making them discontented with their situation. Of all the sources of human suffering, with the exception only of guilt, this is the most fruitful. It produces envy, malice, and all uncharitableness; it separates the various classes of society from each other; converts them into opposing elements; and occasions more than half the violations of those two great precepts of the Divine Lawgiver, that we should do as we would be done by, and love our neighbour as ourselves.

It will probably be urged by the advocates of immediate emancipation, that these observations go the length of arresting all exertions to improve our condition or that of others; that it is this very discontent which impels us to salutary action; and that to destroy it would be to take away every

motive for labour of any kind, bodily or intellectual, beyond what is necessary to supply the wants of nature. It will, perhaps, be also asserted, that the argument in favour of the contented ignorance of the slave will equally apply to all classes of mankind, and that the whole theory on which the government of the United States is based, is utterly at war with that here propounded. The conclusion is not admitted, because the acquisition of new ideas of freedom, while it only renders the slave more miserable, and less inclined to useful labour, enables the freeman to become more efficient in his sphere of action, and to improve his condition by the application of his acquired knowledge to his own affairs, or the administration of his government. Every increase of information, and every new expansion of mind, can be made subservient to the purposes of his happiness; whereas with the slave, the effect is diametrically opposite, because the acquisition of all knowledge not essential to the performance of his duties produces discontent, which only makes his present situation less tolerable, while it does not open the least prospect of bettering it in future.

All experience goes to prove that knowledge and freedom are sources of happiness and prosperity to the white man; and the same unerring guide

has demonstrated thus far, that at best they have only made the blacks of the United States less useful and respectable in their callings. If we mistake not, it has been also clearly demonstrated by facts and legitimate deductions, that the emancipation of the slaves of the South, whether brought about by voluntary concession, coercive legislation, or servile war, would only be productive of consequences equally deplorable to all parties concerned.

To bring the actual situation of the slave of the South more directly to the view of the reader, and enable him to form a more correct opinion than he can derive from the pictures, addresses, almanacs, sermons, and declamations of the immediate abolitionists, we will now lay before him the following letters, written in reply to certain queries of the author of this inquiry. The first is from a gentleman possessing a large estate and a very considerable number of slaves, in what is usually called lower Virginia, and whom no motive of personal or political interest can swerve one hair's breadth from the truth. The second is written by a judicial officer of the Superior Court of that state, whose name and character are a sufficient guarantee for all he writes. It exhibits the social and domestic relations between the master and

slave in that part of Virginia lying west of the Blue Ridge, which is chiefly a grain-growing country, and where the slaves are comparatively few. It may not be impertinent to add, that the writer of this work has had sufficient experience, during a long residence at the South, to enable him to vouch for the truth of the pictures here presented. The northern reader is requested to peruse these letters attentively, and then contrast them with the horrors depicted in the various publications of the abolitionists.

“DEAR SIR,—As regards the first query, which relates to ‘the rights and duties of the slave,’ I do not know how extensive a view of this branch of the subject is contemplated. In its simplest aspect, as understood and acted on in Virginia, I should say that the slave is entitled to an abundance of good plain food; to coarse but comfortable apparel; to a warm but humble dwelling; to protection when well, and to succour when sick; and, in return, that it is his duty to render to his master all the service he can, consistently with perfect health, and to behave submissively and honestly. Other remarks suggest themselves, but they will be more appropriately introduced under different heads.

"2d. 'The domestic relations of master and slave.' These relations are much misunderstood by many persons to the North, who regard the terms as synonymous with oppressor and oppressed. Nothing can be farther from the fact. The condition of the negroes in this state has been greatly ameliorated. The proprietors were formerly fewer and richer than at present. Distant quarters were often kept up to support the aristocratic mansion. They were rarely visited by their owners ; and heartless overseers, frequently changed, were employed to manage them for a share of the crop. These men scourged the land, and sometimes the slaves. Their tenure was but for a year, and of course they made the most of their brief authority. Owing to the influence of our institutions, property has become subdivided, and most persons live on or near their estates. There are exceptions, to be sure, and particularly among wealthy gentlemen in the towns ; but these last are almost all enlightened and humane, and alike liberal to the soil, and to the slave who cultivates it. I could point out some noble instances of patriotic and spirited improvement among them. But to return to the resident proprietors : most of them have been raised on the estates ; from the older negroes they have received in infancy numberless

acts of kindness ; the younger ones have not unfrequently been their playmates (not the most suitable, I admit), and much good-will is thus generated on both sides. In addition to this, most men feel attached to their property ; and this attachment is stronger in the case of persons than of things. I know it and feel it. It is true, there are harsh masters ; but there are also bad husbands and bad fathers. . They are all exceptions to the rule, not the rule itself. Shall we therefore condemn in the gross those relations, and the rights and authority they imply, from their occasional abuse ? I could mention many instances of strong attachment on the part of the slave, but will only adduce one or two, of which I have been the object. It became a question whether a faithful servant, bred up with me from boyhood, should give up his master or his wife and children, to whom he was affectionately attached, and most attentive and kind. The trial was a severe one, but he determined to break those tender ties and remain with me. I left it entirely to his discretion, though I would not, from considerations of interest, have taken for him quadruple the price I should probably have obtained. Fortunately, in the sequel, I was enabled to purchase his family, with the exception of a daughter, happily situated ; and nothing but death shall

henceforth part them. Were it put to the test, I am convinced that many masters would receive this striking proof of devotion. A gentleman but a day or two since informed me of a similar and even stronger case, afforded by one of his slaves. As the reward of assiduous and delicate attention to a venerated parent, in her last illness, I proposed to purchase and liberate a healthy and intelligent woman, about thirty years of age, the best nurse, and, in all respects, one of the best servants in the state, of which I was only part owner; but she declined to leave the family, and has been since rather better than free. I shall be excused for stating a ludicrous case I heard of some time ago:—A favourite and indulged servant requested his master to sell him to another gentleman. His master refused to do so, but told him he was at perfect liberty to go to the North, if he were not already free enough. After a while he repeated the request; and, on being urged to give an explanation of his singular conduct, told his master that he considered himself consumptive, and would soon die; and he thought Mr. B—— was better able to bear the loss than his master. He was sent to a medicinal spring, and recovered his health, if indeed he had ever lost it, of which his master had been unapprized. It may not be amiss

to describe my deportment towards my servants, whom I endeavour to render happy while I make them profitable. I never turn a deaf ear, but listen patiently to their communications. I chat familiarly with those who have passed service, or have not begun to render it. With the others I observe a more prudent reserve, but I encourage all to approach me without awe. I hardly ever go to town without having commissions to execute for some of them; and think they prefer to employ me, from a belief that, if their money should not quite hold out, I would add a little to it; and I not unfrequently do, in order to get a better article. The relation between myself and my slaves is decidedly friendly. I keep up pretty exact discipline, mingled with kindness; and hardly ever lose property by thievish, or labour by runaway slaves. I never lock the outer doors of my house. It is done, but done by the servants; and I rarely bestow a thought on the matter. I leave home periodically for two months, and commit the dwelling-house, plate, and other valuables to the servants, without even an enumeration of the articles.

“3d. ‘The duration of the labour of the slave.’ The day is usually considered long enough. Employment at night is not exacted by me, except to shell corn once a week for their own consumption,

and on a few other extraordinary occasions. *The people*, as we generally call them, are required to leave their houses at daybreak, and to work until dark, with the intermission of half an hour to an hour at breakfast, and one to two hours at dinner, according to the season and sort of work. In this respect I suppose our negroes will bear a favourable comparison with any labourers whatever.

“4th. ‘The liberty usually allowed the slave; his holydays and amusements; and the way in which they usually spend their evenings and holydays.’ They are prohibited from going off the estate without first obtaining leave; though they often transgress, and with impunity, except in flagrant cases. Those who have wives on other plantations, visit them on certain specified nights, and have an allowance of time for going and returning, proportioned to the distance. My negroes are permitted, and indeed encouraged, to raise as many ducks and chickens as they can; to cultivate vegetables for their own use, and a patch of corn for sale; to exercise their trades when they possess one, which many do; to catch muskrats and other animals for the fur or the flesh; to raise bees, and, in fine, to earn an honest penny in any way which chance or their own ingenuity may offer. The modes specified are however, those

most commonly resorted to, and enable provident servants to make from five to thirty dollars a piece. The corn is of a different sort from that which I cultivate, and is all bought by me. A great many fowls are raised: I have this year known ten dollars worth sold by one man at one time. One of the chief sources of profit is the fur of the muskrat; for the purpose of catching which the marshes on the estate have been parcelled out and appropriated from time immemorial, and are held by a tenure little short of fee-simple. The negroes are indebted to Nat Turner* and Tappan for a curtailment of some of their privileges. As a sincere friend to the blacks, I have much regretted the reckless interference of these persons, on account of the restrictions it has become, or been thought, necessary to impose. Since the exploit of the former hero, they have been forbidden to preach except to their fellow-slaves, the property of the same owner; to have public funerals, unless a white person officiates; or to be taught to read and write. Their funerals formerly gave them great satisfaction, and it was customary here to furnish the relations of the deceased with bacon, spirit,

* The leader of the insurrection in Lower Virginia, in which upwards of a hundred white persons, principally women and children, were massacred in cold blood.

flour, sugar, and butter, with which a grand entertainment, in their way, was got up. We were once much amused by a hearty fellow requesting his mistress to let him have his funeral during his lifetime, when it would do him some good. The waggish request was granted; and, I venture to say, there never was a funeral, the subject of which enjoyed it so much. When permitted, some of our negroes preached with great fluency. I was present a few years since when an Episcopal minister addressed the people, by appointment. On the conclusion of an excellent sermon, a negro preacher rose and thanked the gentleman kindly for his discourse, but frankly told him the congregation 'did not understand his *lingo*.' He then proceeded himself, with great vehemence and volubility, coining words where they had not been made to his hand, or rather his tongue, and impressing his hearers, doubtless, with a decided opinion of his superiority over his white co-labourer in the field of grace. My brother and I, who own contiguous estates, have lately erected a chapel on the line between them, and have employed an acceptable minister of the Baptist persuasion, to which the negroes almost exclusively belong, to afford them religious instruction. Except as a preparatory step to emancipation, I con-

sider it exceedingly impolitic, even as regards the slaves themselves, to permit them to read and write: 'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.' And it is certainly impolitic as regards their masters, on the principle that 'knowledge is power.' My servants have not as long holydays as those of most other persons. I allow three days at Christmas, and a day at each of three other periods, besides a little time to work their patches, or, if very busy, I sometimes prefer to work them myself. Most of the ancient pastimes have been lost in this neighbourhood, and religion, mock or real, has succeeded them. The banjo, their national instrument, is known but in name, or in a few of the tunes which have survived. Some of the younger negroes sing and dance, but the evenings and holydays are usually occupied in working, in visiting, and in praying and singing hymns. The primitive customs and sports are, I believe, better preserved farther South, where slaves were brought from Africa long after they ceased to come here.

"6th. 'The provision usually made for their food and clothing; for those who are too young or too old to labour.' My men receive twelve quarts of Indian meal (the abundant and universal allowance in this state), 7 salted herrings, and 2 lbs.

smoked bacon or 3 lbs. of pork a week ; the other hands proportionally less. But, generally speaking, their food is issued daily, with the exception of meal, and consists of fish or bacon for breakfast, and meat, fresh or salted, with vegetables, whenever we can provide them, for dinner ; or, for a month or two in the spring, fresh fish cooked with a little bacon. This mode is rather more expensive to me than that of weekly rations, but more comfortable to the servants. Superannuated or invalid slaves draw their provisions regularly once a week ; and the moment a child ceases to be nourished by its mother, it receives 8-quarts of meal (more than it can consume), and $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of lard. Besides the food furnished by me, nearly all the servants are able to make some addition from their private stores ; and there is, among the adults, hardly an instance of one so improvident as not to do it. He must be an unthrifty fellow indeed who cannot realize the wish of the famous Henry IVth in regard to the French peasantry, and enjoy his fowl on Sunday. I always keep on hand, for the use of the negroes, sugar, molasses, &c., which, though not regularly issued, are applied for on the slightest pretexts, and frequently no pretext at all, and are never refused except in cases of misconduct. In regard to clothing :—the men and boys

receive a winter coat and trousers of strong cloth, 3 shirts, a stout pair of shoes and socks, and a pair of summer pantaloons, every year; a hat about every second year, and a great-coat and blanket every third year. Instead of great-coats and hats, the women have large capes to protect the bust in bad weather, and handkerchiefs for the head. The articles furnished are good and serviceable; and, with their own acquisitions, make their appearance decent and respectable. On Sunday they are even fine. The aged and invalid are clad as regularly as the rest, but less substantially. Mothers receive a little raw cotton, in proportion to the number of children, with the privilege of having the yarn, when spun, woven at my expense. I provide them with blankets. Orphans are put with careful women, and treated with tenderness. I am attached to the little slaves, and encourage familiarity among them. Sometimes, when I ride near the quarters, they come running after me with the most whimsical requests, and are rendered happy by the distribution of some little donation. The clothing described is that which is given to the crop hands. Home servants, a numerous class in Virginia, are of course clad in a different and very superior manner. I neglected to mention, in the proper place, that there are on each of my plantations a

kitchen, an oven, and one or more cooks ; and that each hand is furnished with a tin bucket for his food, which is carried into the field by little negroes, who also supply the labourers with water.

“7. ‘Their treatment when sick.’ My negroes go or are carried, as soon as they are attacked, to a spacious and well-ventilated hospital, near the mansion-house. They are there received by an attentive nurse, who has an assortment of medicine, additional bedclothing, and the command of as much light food as she may require, either from the table or the store-room of the proprietor. Wine, sago, rice, and other little comforts appertaining to such an establishment, are always kept on hand. The condition of the sick is much better than that of the poor whites or free coloured people in the neighbourhood.

“8. ‘Their rewards and punishments.’ I occasionally bestow little gratuities for good conduct, and particularly after harvest ; and hardly ever refuse a favour asked by those who faithfully perform their duty. Vicious and idle servants are punished with stripes, moderately inflicted ; to which, in the case of theft, is added privation of meat, a severe punishment to those who are never suffered to be without it on any other account. From my limited observation, I think that servants to the North work

much harder than our slaves. I was educated at a college in one of the free states, and, on my return to Virginia, was struck with the contrast. I was astonished at the number of idle domestics, and actually worried my mother, much to my contrition since, to reduce the establishment. I say to my contrition, because, after eighteen years residence in the good old Dominion, I find myself surrounded by a troop of servants about as numerous as that against which I formerly so loudly exclaimed: While on this subject it may not be amiss to state a case of manumission, which occurred about three years since. My nearest neighbour, a man of immense wealth, owned a favourite servant, a fine fellow, with polished manners and excellent disposition, who reads and writes, and is thoroughly versed in the duties of a butler and housekeeper, in the performance of which he was trusted without limit. This man was, on the death of his master, emancipated, with a legacy of \$6,000, besides about \$2,000 more which he had been permitted to accumulate, and had deposited with his master, who had given him credit for it. The use that this man, apparently so well qualified for freedom, and who has had an opportunity of travelling and of judging for him-

self, makes of his money and his time, is somewhat remarkable. In consequence of his exemplary conduct, he has been permitted to reside in the state, and for very moderate wages occupies the same situation he did in the old establishment; and will probably continue to occupy it as long as he lives. He has no children of his own, but has put a little girl, a relation of his, to school. Except in this instance, and in the purchase of a few plain articles of furniture, his freedom and his money seem not much to have benefited him. A servant of mine, who is intimate with him, thinks he is not as happy as he was before his liberation. Several other servants were freed at the same time, with smaller legacies, but I do not know what has become of them.

“I do not regard negro slavery, however mitigated, as a Utopian system, and have not intended so to delineate it. But it exists, and the difficulty of removing it is felt and acknowledged by all save the fanatics, who, like ‘fools, rush in where angels dare not tread.’ It is pleasing to know that its burdens are not too heavy to be borne. That the treatment of slaves in this state is humane, and even indulgent, may be inferred from the fact of their rapid increase and great longevity.

I believe that, constituted as they are, morally and physically, they are as happy as any peasantry in the world; and I venture to affirm, as the result of my reading and inquiry, that in no country are the labourers so liberally and invariably supplied with bread and meat as are the negro slaves of the United States. However great the dearth of provisions, famine never reaches them.

“P. S.—It might have been stated above, that on this estate there are about 160 blacks. With the exception of infants, there has been in eighteen months but one death that I remember, that of a man fully 65 years of age. The bill for medical attendance from the second day of last November, comprising upwards of a year, is less than forty dollars.”

“Sir,—Some eight or ten days ago, I received a letter from Mr. * * * * * of Richmond, asking me to assist him in furnishing you with information respecting the condition of our slaves in this part of Virginia, and enclosing an extract from your letter to him, stating the points on which you most desired precise information. I was at that time holding one of my courts, and my circuit is not yet over. In consequence of this, I have had very

little time to turn my attention to the subject, and I fear that what I am about to say will very feebly aid you in the patriotic task you have undertaken, of endeavouring to allay the feelings engendered at the North by the falsehoods of the abolitionists. Indeed, so pressed am I for time, that I would, as Mr. * * * * suggests (in the event of my court interfering with the task), obtain the assistance of some intelligent neighbour, if I could find one willing to undertake it. But, having failed in this endeavour, and feeling deeply the importance of giving a true picture of the Southern slave to the Northern abolitionist, which can only be done by comparing the accounts you may receive from different quarters, I proceed to answer your inquiries as fully as my engagements permit, premising that my remarks as to the condition of the slaves apply exclusively to their treatment and condition in the *Valley* of Virginia, which is, as you know, a grain-growing portion of the state. The cotton and tobacco portion of it might exhibit some variety in this picture. I have lived in all, but confine myself to the place of my present residence.

“ I am not certain that I understand the scope of the first inquiry, ‘The laws for the government of the master and the slave in Virginia.’ Properly speaking, there are no laws affecting this rela-

tion. Both are under the protection of the law to a certain extent. The master would be punished for any mayhem or felony committed on the slave, but it has been decided that no prosecution will lie against him, even for excessive beating, not amounting to mayhem or felony. It has never been found necessary to enact laws for the government of the master in his treatment of the slave, for reasons that will appear hereafter.

“ We have many laws respecting slaves, controlling them in certain particulars. Thus, they are not allowed to keep or carry military weapons—nor to leave home without a written permission—nor to assemble at any meeting-house or other place in *the night*, under pretence of religious worship—nor at any school, for the purpose of being taught to read or write—nor to trade and go at large as freemen—nor to hire themselves out—nor to preach or exhort. Some of the penalties for a violation of these laws are imposed upon the master, for permitting his slave to do certain acts ; in other cases the slave is liable to be taken before a justice of the peace, and punished by stripes, never exceeding thirty-nine.

“ Slaves emancipated by their masters are directed to leave the state within twelve months from the date of their emancipation.

"These laws, and every other having the appearance of rigour towards the slave, are nearly dead letters upon our statute book, unless during times of excitement, or since the efforts of the abolitionists have reanimated them. I have, until lately, scarcely known an instance in which they have been enforced.

"It is equally rare to witness the trial of a slave for any except very serious crimes. There are many offences committed by them, for which a freeman would be sent to the penitentiary, that are not noticed at all, or punished by a few stripes under the directions of the master.

"When tried for a crime, it is before a court of at least five magistrates, who must be unanimous to convict. They are not entitled to a trial by jury, but it is acknowledged on all hands that this is a benefit, and not a disadvantage. The magistrates are more respectable than common jurors, and, being generally slave-holders themselves, they feel a certain sympathy with the prisoner, or, at all events, an absence of that prejudice to which common jurors are very subject.

"Slaves may be taught, and many of them are taught, in their owner's family. They are allowed to attend religious worship conducted by white ministers, and to receive from them religious in-

struction. In point of fact, they go where they please on Sundays, and at all other times when they are not engaged in labour.

“2. ‘The rights and duties of slaves,’ as a distinct class, are not defined by law. They depend upon usage or custom, which controls the will of the master. Thus, the law does not recognise their right to hold property, but no instance is known of the master’s interfering with their little acquisitions; and it often happens, that they are considerable enough to purchase themselves and family. In such cases I have never known the master to exact from the slave the full price that he might have obtained from others. In the same manner, the quantity and quality of food and clothing, the hours of labour and rest, the holydays, the privileges, &c. of the slave, are regulated by custom, to depart materially from which would disgrace the master in public opinion.

“3. ‘The domestic relations of the master and slave.’ On this subject the grossest misrepresentations have been made. It seems to be imagined at the North that our society is divided *horizontally*. All above the line, tyrants—all below it, trembling, crouching slaves. Nothing can be more unlike the real picture. The intercourse between the master and slave is kind, respectful, and ———aching to intimacy. It must be recollected,

that they have been brought up together, and often form attachments that are never broken. The servants about the house are treated rather as humble friends than otherwise. Those employed differently have less intercourse with the white family ; but, when they meet, there is a civil, and often cordial greeting on both sides. The slaves generally look upon their masters and mistresses as their protectors and friends. They seldom, I am persuaded, think of the injustice or cruelty of being held in bondage, unless they have tasted of the tree of knowledge to which they are invited by some Satanic abolitionist. Born slaves, and familiarized with their condition, they have no wish to change it when left to themselves. When they compare it with that of the poor labouring whites in their own neighbourhood, no envy is excited, but an opposite sentiment. The slave of a gentleman universally considers himself a superior being to '*poor white folks*.' They take pride in their master's prosperity ; identify his interests with their own ; frequently assume his name, and even his title, and speak of his farm, his crops, and other possessions, as their own ; and well, indeed, may they employ this language, for they know that the greater part of the profits is liberally devoted to their use.

“In their nature the slaves are generally affectionate, and particularly so to the children of the family, which lays the foundation of the attachments I have spoken of, continuing through life. The children are always favourites, and the feeling is reciprocated. It is a great mistake to suppose that the children are permitted to tyrannise over the slaves, young or old, and that they learn in this way domineering habits. Some may, but more frequently there is rather too much familiarity between the white females and children of a family, and the slaves of the same description. The children play together on terms of great equality, and if the white child gives a blow, he is apt to have it returned with interest. At many tables you will find the white children rising from them, with their little hands full of the best of every thing, to carry to their nurses or playmates; and I have often known them to deny themselves for the sake of their favourites. These propensities are encouraged, and every thing like violence or tyranny strictly prohibited. The consequence is, that when the young master (or mistress) is installed into his full rights of property, he finds around him no alien hirelings, ready to quit his service upon the slightest provocation, but attached and faithful friends, known to him from his infancy,

and willing to share his fortunes, wherever they may carry him. The connexion is more that of the Scottish clansman than of the English serf in times past, and it influences all their future intercourse. The old gray-headed servants are addressed by almost every member of the white family as uncles or aunts. The others are treated with at least as much respectful familiarity as if they were white labourers, and I should say with more. Fully aware of their standing and consequence, they never hesitate to apply to their masters and mistresses in every difficulty. If they have any want, they expect to be relieved—if they are maltreated, they ask redress at their hands. Seldom or never are appeals of this kind made in vain. Injury to the slave from any quarter is regarded as an injury to the master. On no subject is a Virginian more sensitive; for he considers himself bound, by every moral obligation, to protect and defend his slave. If he is carried before a justice for any offence, the master accompanies him; if he is arraigned before the courts, the master employs counsel, and does every thing in his power to see that he has justice. In fact, the disposition is to screen the slave by every possible means, even when his guilt is apparent, and I have known this carried to very unjustifiable lengths. In short,

as far as my observation has extended, and I have been in free as well as slave states, I do not hesitate to affirm, that the domestic relations of the master and slave are of a more familiar, confidential, and even respectful character, than those of the employer and hireling elsewhere.

“4. ‘The usual duration of the labour of the slave’ is from sunrise to sunset, with the exception of about one hour and a half allowed for breakfast, and from 12 to 2 o’clock for dinner. In harvest-time they get out somewhat earlier. But any extraordinary diligence during this period is more than made up by their being allowed, at its termination, a few days to labour for themselves, or for others who have not finished, and from whom they receive wages. The women in this part of the state do very little field-work. They are engaged in spinning, cooking for the out-hands, and taking care of the children. Few women are worth their victuals and clothes. Their labours are very light and profitless. A white labouring woman will do double as much.

“5. ‘The liberty usually allowed him, his holy-days and amusements, the manner in which they usually pass their evenings and holydays.’ Under these heads may be classed various privileges enjoyed by the slave. When he is not at work he

is under no restriction or surveillance. He goes where he pleases, seldom taking the trouble to ask for a pass ; and if he is on the farm at the appointed hours, no inquiry is made how he has employed the interval. The regular holydays are two at Easter, two at Whitsuntide, and a week at Christmas. These he enjoys by prescription, and others, such as Saturday evenings, by the indulgence of his master. He passes them in any way he pleases. Generally they are spent in visiting from house to house, and in various amusements. His favourite one, if he can raise a violin, is dancing. But this, unfortunately, is going out of fashion, both with whites and blacks, and no good substitute has been found for it. They however assemble at their cabins to laugh, chat, sing, and tell stories, with all imaginable glee. To see them under these circumstances, you would never suppose they were groaning under oppression, or brooding over melancholy thoughts. It would grieve an abolitionist to hear their free and joyous peals of laughter, and their light-hearted conversation. No present care seems to annoy, no anticipated sorrow to deject them, but they surrender themselves fully and entirely to the enjoyment of the passing moments. They know that, under all circumstances, their masters must provide for them. Of course they

have no anxiety about their families, or the failure of crops, or the course of the seasons, or the horrors of debt, or any other of the many circumstances which imbitter the life of the freeman, and render sad or thoughtful the gayest disposition. Hence they appear to be, and they are proverbially, the merriest people in the world; and it seems cruel to awake them from their dream of happiness, to tantalize them with prospects that can never be realized.

“Other of the slaves who are more provident employ a portion of their holydays and evenings in working for themselves. Each head of a family, or married man or woman, has a cabin allotted for his or her accommodation. These cabins are usually made of logs, chinked and plastered, with plank or dirt floors. Some proprietors build them of brick or stone, or framed wood, but I do not believe the slaves generally prefer them. They like the large, open fireplace of the cabin, where a dozen or more can sit round the blazing hearth, filled with as much wood as would supply a patent stove for ten days. Stoves they abominate, and small Rumfordized fireplaces. Near their cabins they have ground allotted for their garden and *patch* of corn. In their gardens they have every vegetable they choose to cultivate, besides raising pumpkins, broom-corn, &c., in their masters' corn-fields.

Most of them are permitted to raise a hog, to dispose of as they please, and these hogs are invariably the largest and fattest on the farm. They also raise fowls of every description, and sell them for the most part to their owners, at a fair price. Their allowance of food is never diminished on these accounts. Their hog, their fowls, their vegetables, their brooms, and baskets, and flag chairs, and many other articles, they are allowed to sell for the purpose of purchasing Sunday clothes and finery, to show off at meetings and other public occasions. In this way, those who are at all industrious are enabled to appear as well dressed as any peasantry in the world. . The picture drawn in an article I have found and cut from the *Virginian*, a paper published in this place, is strictly a correct one, and leaves me no more to say on this part of the subject.*

"6. 'The provision made for their food and clothing, for those who are too young or too old to labour.' The slaves always prefer Indian corn-meal to flour. Of this, the old and young, in this part of Virginia, are allowed just as much as they can eat or *destroy*. They have, besides, a certain quantity of bacon given out every week, amounting to about half a pound a day for each labourer or

* See extract from a letter to the editor of the *Albany Daily Advertiser*, p. 226.

grown person. When they have beef or fish, the allowance of bacon is less ; but, as it is the food they love best, they have always a portion of it. Besides this, they have milk and vegetables on most farms in abundance, without touching their own stores. The old and infirm fare like the rest, unless their situation requires coffee, sugar, &c., which are always provided. The young slaves have also their meats, but less in quantity, and they depend more upon bread, milk, and vegetables. To look at them, you would see at once they are well fed. On small farms the slaves fare better than on large ones, there being little difference in the food of the whites and blacks, except in articles of mere luxury. But, on the largest, their usual allowance is that which I have mentioned. They have three meals a day, and it is rare to see them eating what they call dry bread at any one.

“ Their allowance of clothing is quite uniform, and consists of a hat, a blanket, two suits of clothes, three shirts or shifts, and two pair of shoes, a year. The winter suit is of strong linsey cloth ; the summer, of linen for the men, and striped cotton for the women. The men’s cloth is dressed and full’d. The children have linsey and cotton garments, but no shoes or hat, until they are ten or eleven years old, and begin to do something.

Their beds are sometimes of feather, generally of straw, and are well furnished : some prefer to lie like the Indians, on their blankets.

Comparing their situation in respect to food and clothing with our own white labourers, I would say that it is generally preferable. In each case, much depends on the industry and management of the party ; but there is this difference, that the slave, however lazy or improvident, is furnished with food and clothing at regular periods, which the white man of the same temperament is unable to procure. When the white man, too, is so old and infirm that he can no longer labour, his situation is truly deplorable, if he has laid up nothing for support. But the old and infirm slave is still supported by his master, with the same care and attention as before. He cannot even set him free without providing for his maintenance, for our law makes his estate liable.

“7. ‘Their treatment when sick.’ Being considered as valuable property, it might naturally be concluded that they would be properly attended to when sick. But better feelings than any connected with their value as property prompt the white family to pay every attention to the sick slave. If it is deemed at all necessary, a physician is immediately called in. On large farms he is frequently

employed by the year ; but, if not, he is sent for whenever there is occasion for his services. If the slave is a hireling, our law compels the owner, not the hirer, to pay the physician's fees, so that the latter has every motive of interest to send for a physician, without being liable for the expense. Where there are many slaves together, the proprietor sometimes erects an hospital, provided with nurses and the usual accommodations. In all cases coming under my observation, whatever is necessary for the comfort of the sick is furnished, as far as the master has means. They are frequently visited by the white family, and whatever they wish to have is supplied. Such indulgence, and even tenderness, is extended to them on these occasions, that it sometimes induces the lazy to feign sickness ; but I have never known them, in these suspected cases, to be hurried to their work until their deception became manifest, or the report of the physician justified it. It is my decided conviction, that the poor labourers of no country under heaven are better taken care of than the sick slaves in Virginia. There may be, and no doubt are, exceptions to many of these observations ; but I speak of their general treatment as I have known it, or heard it reported.

“8. ‘Their rewards and punishments.’ Of re-

wards, properly speaking, the slaves have few—of indulgences they have many, but they are not employed as rewards, for all usually partake in them without discrimination. The system of rewards has not, to my knowledge, been fairly tried. Sometimes slaves who have conducted themselves well, or laboured diligently, are allowed more time than others to attend to their own affairs, or permitted to trade on their own account, paying some small sum, and they are treated, of course, with greater respect and confidence than the idle and worthless. But I know of no instance in which specific rewards have been offered for specific acts of good conduct. In this respect they are treated much like soldiers and sailors.

“As to their punishments, about which so many falsehoods have been published, they are rare, and seldom disproportioned to the offence. Our laws are mild, and make little discrimination between slaves and free whites, except in a few political offences. The punishments inflicted by the master partake of the same character. The moral sense of the community would not tolerate cruelty in a master. I know of nothing which would bring him more surely into disgrace. On a farm where there may be one hundred slaves, there will not, perhaps, be one punished on account of his work

during the year, although it is often done in a careless, slovenly manner, and not half as much as a white labourer would do. For insolent and unruly conduct to their overseers, for quarrelling and fighting with each other, for theft and other offences, which would send the white man to the whipping-post or penitentiary, they are punished more frequently, but always with moderation. Very often they escape altogether, when the white man would certainly be punished. I have lived in different parts of Virginia for more than 30 years since my attention has been directed to such subjects; and I do not recollect half a dozen instances in which I ever saw a grown slave stripped and whipped. Such a spectacle is almost as rare as to see a similar punishment inflicted on a white man. When it is considered that, except for the highest grade of crimes, the punishment of the slave is left pretty much (practically) to his master's discretion, I am persuaded it will be found that they are in this respect in no worse condition than labourers elsewhere. No other punishment is inflicted except stripes or blows. They are not imprisoned, or placed upon short allowance, or condemned to any cruel or unusual punishments from which white persons are exempted. The disgusting prints of the abolitionists are mere fancy pieces,

to which there is nothing among us bearing any similitude.

“The worst feature in our society, and the most revolting, is the purchase and sale of slaves; and it is this which renders their situations precarious and uncomfortable, and occasions them more uneasiness than all other causes combined. On this subject I will submit a few observations before I close this letter. So far as the traffic is confined to the neighbourhood, it is of little consequence, and is often done for the accommodation of the slave. It breaks no ties of kindred, and occasions only a momentary pang, by transferring the slave from the master who perhaps is no longer able to keep him, to one as good who is able, or who purchases because he owns his wife or child, &c. It is the sale to negro-buyers by profession which is in general so odious to the slave, although there are instances in which these artful men prevail with them to apply to their owners to be sold. Such sales, except in the rare instance just alluded to, are never voluntarily made of slaves whose conduct and character are good. Masters will not part with their slaves but from sheer necessity, or for flagrant delinquencies, which in other countries would be punished by deportation at least. Thousands retain them when they know

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full well that their pecuniary condition would be greatly improved by selling, or even giving them away. It is the last property the master can be induced to part with. Nothing but the dread of a jail will prevail with him. Negro-traders, although there are many among us, are universally despised by the master, and detested by the body of the slaves. Their trade is supported by the misfortunes of the master, and the crimes or misconduct of the slave, and not by the will of either party, except in a few instances. Sometimes the slave, after committing a theft or other crime, will abscond, for fear of detection; or will be enticed away from his master's service by holding out to him false hopes; and perhaps the negro-buyer himself is the decoy. If caught, he is generally sold, for the sake of the example to other slaves. From these sources the negro-buyers are supplied; but it does not happen, in one case out of a thousand, that the master willingly sells an honest, faithful slave. The man doing so would be looked upon as a sordid, inhuman wretch; and be shunned by his neighbours and countrymen of respectable standing.

"I believe, if any plan could be fallen upon to remove our slaves to a place where they would be willing to go, and where their condition would be

probably improved, that many, very many masters would be ready to manumit them. An opinion is entertained by increasing numbers, that slave labour is too expensive to be continued in a grain-growing state, if its place can be supplied by free-men. In other words, that the free labourer would *cost less*, and *work harder*, than the slave. But the slaves themselves are unwilling to go to Liberia, and very few would accept their freedom on that condition. Some, already emancipated, remain in the state, incurring the constant risk of being sold as slaves. To send them to any part of our own country without worldly knowledge or capital, is deemed by most masters false humanity ; and to retain them here in the condition of free negroes is impossible.

“ Until some plan can be suggested to remove these difficulties, under the guidance and direction of the constituted authorities, we are averse to all agitation of the subject. We know it will be attended with danger to one class, and will increase the burdens and privations of the other. Hence our indignation at the movements of the Northern abolitionists, who are meddling with a subject they know nothing about. Let them come among us, and see the actual condition of the slaves, as well as

of the whites, and I am persuaded all whose intentions are really good, would, on their return, advise their deluded co-operators to desist from agitation.

"I have thus endeavoured to answer your inquiries ; but I know that the sketch is imperfect. I have had but a part of a day to do it in, and I have been obliged to omit many pertinent observations. But, if you wish fuller information on any particular point, I shall be happy to communicate with you further, and in a few more days shall be at greater leisure.

"Very respectfully, I am, sir,

"Your obedient servant."

The abolitionists are accustomed to ascribe the kind treatment of the master to his slave to a mere interested feeling. It is his interest to treat him well, that he may derive the greater benefit from his services. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that this is the case, it may be asked, what more effectual security can be offered against cruelty and oppression, or one more extensive in its operation, than that universal principle which more or less influences the conduct of all mankind? It were well if we all had the same direct and palpable interest in doing good, for the world would be the better for it in every respect. But is it true that

the mere pecuniary interest of the master in his slave constitutes the sole security for his kind treatment? The preceding letters indicate that the best impulses of humanity operate in behalf of the slave, and that their social and domestic relations naturally tend to produce feelings of benevolence on one hand, gratitude on the other.

The statements in these letters are corroborated by the author of a late excellent work, entitled "The South-West; By a Yankee," who is understood to be Professor Ingraham. Speaking of the different deportment of Northern and native Southern planters towards their slaves, he observes:

"Northerners are entirely unaccustomed to their habits, which are perfectly understood and appreciated by Southerners, who have been familiar with Africans from childhood; whom they have had for their nurses, playmates, and 'bearers;' and between whom and themselves a reciprocal and very natural attachment exists, which, on the gentleman's part, involuntarily extends to the whole coloured race, exhibited in a kindly feeling and condescending familiarity, for which he receives gratitude in return. On the part of the slave, this attachment is manifested by an affection and faithfulness which only cease with life. Of this state of feeling, which a Southern life and education

can only give, the Northerner knows nothing."—"The slave always prefers a Southern master, because he knows he will be understood by him. His kindly feelings towards, and his sympathies with slaves, as such, are as honourable to his heart as gratifying to the subjects of them. He treats with suitable allowance those peculiarities of the race, which the unpractised Northerner will construe into idleness, obstinacy, revenge, or hatred."

Here follows another picture of the horrors of slavery, by the same hand. The author, after describing some not very agreeable peculiarities in the mode of keeping the Sabbath at Natchez, on the Mississippi, adds :

"But this unpleasing picture of a Sabbath morning has brighter tints to redeem the graver character of its moral shades. Of all that picturesque multitude of holyday slaves, two thirds, the majority of whom are women, are on their way to church, into whose galleries they congregate at the hour of divine service in great numbers, and worship with an apparent devoutness and attention, which beings, who boast intellects of a higher order, might not disdain to imitate. The female slaves very generally attend church in this country ; but whether to display their tawdry finery, of which they are fond to a proverb, or for a better purpose

I will not undertake to determine. The males prefer collecting in little knots in the streets, where, imitating the manners, bearing, and language of their masters; they commence, with grave faces and in pompous language, selecting hard, high-sounding words, which are almost always misapplied, and distorted from their original sound as well as sense, to a most ridiculous degree; astounding their gaping auditors ‘ob de field-nigger class,’ who cannot boast such enviable accomplishments.”

We present another picture by the same hand :

“The little candidates for ‘field honours’ are useless articles on a plantation during the first five or six years of their existence. They are then to take their first lesson in the elementary part of their education. When they have learned their manual alphabet tolerably well, they are placed in the field to take a spell at cotton-picking. The first day in the field is their proudest day. The young negroes look forward to it with as much restlessness and impatience as schoolboys to a vacation. Black children are not put to work so young as many children of poor parents in the North. It is often the case, that the children of the domestic servants become pets in the house, and the playmates of the white children of the family.

No scene can be livelier or more interesting to a Northerner, than that which the negro quarters of a well-regulated plantation present on a Sabbath morning, just before church hours. In every cabin the men are shaving and dressing; the women, arrayed in their gay muslins, are arranging their frizzly hair, in which they take no little pride, or investigating the condition of their children; the old people, neatly clothed, are quietly conversing or smoking about the doors; and those of the younger portion who are not undergoing the infliction of the wash-tub, are enjoying themselves in the shade of the trees, or around some little pond, with as much zest as though slavery and freedom were synonymous terms. When all are dressed, and the hour arrives for worship, they lock up their cabins, and the whole population of the little village proceeds to the chapel, where divine service is performed, sometimes by an officiating clergyman, and often by the planter himself, if a church-member. The whole plantation is also frequently formed into a Sabbath class, which is instructed by the planter or some member of his family; and often, such is the anxiety of the master that they should perfectly understand what they are taught, a hard matter in the present state of their intellect, that no means calculated to ad-

vance their progress are left untried. I was not long since shown a manuscript catechism, drawn up with great care and judgment by a distinguished planter, on a plan admirably adapted to the comprehension of the negroes."

"It is now popular to treat slaves with kindness; and those planters who are known to be inhumanly rigorous to their slaves, are scarcely countenanced by the more intelligent and humane portion of the community. Such instances, however, are very rare; but there are unprincipled men everywhere, who will give vent to their ill feelings and bad passions, not with less good-will upon the back of an indented apprentice, than upon that of a purchased slave. Private chapels are now introduced upon most of the plantations of the more wealthy, which are far from any church; Sabbath schools are instituted for the black children, and Bible classes for the parents, which are superintended by the planter, a chaplain, or some of the female members of the family.

"Nor are planters indifferent to the comfort of their gray-headed slaves. I have been much affected at beholding many exhibitions of their kindly feeling towards them. They always address them in a mild and pleasant manner—as 'Uncle,' or 'Aunty'—titles as peculiar to the old negro and

negress, as 'boy' and 'girl,' to all under forty years of age. Some old Africans are allowed to spend their last years in their houses, without doing any kind of labour; these, if not too infirm, cultivate little patches of ground, on which they raise a few vegetables—for vegetables grow nearly all the year round in this climate—and make a little money to purchase a few extra comforts. They are also always receiving presents from their masters and mistresses, and the negroes on the estate, the latter of whom are extremely desirous of seeing the old people comfortable. A relation of the extra comforts which some planters allow their slaves, would hardly obtain credit at the North. But you must recollect that Southern planters are men—and men of feeling—generous and high-minded, and possessing as much of the 'milk of human kindness' as the sons of colder climes—although they may have been educated to regard that as right, which a different education has led Northerners to consider wrong."

To the foregoing testimonials may be added that of a sensible correspondent of the Albany Daily Advertiser, who, in a letter dated Oct. 2d, 1835, says :

"One of the peculiarities which we noticed in Washington, and indeed in its vicinity, was the universal employment of blacks as labourers and

mechanics. I must confess, when I saw them engaged in respectable occupations, intrusted often with difficult employments, well dressed, and apparently happy in their labour, I could not but draw a most favourable conclusion as to their actual condition. The *galling bonds*, of which we hear so much from the sympathizing advocates of abolition, were not visible ; and, as a race of men, these slaves were altogether in a decidedly better position than their idle, dissipated, and reckless brethren at the North.

“ These persons have kind masters in the District of Columbia ; they are taught to read and write, and they have had the gospel preached to them. This last consideration is an important one. Coleridge says that slavery may be one of the means of bringing the sons of Africa into a state of grace, and who knows but the hand of Providence has designed this ? No abolitionist will contend that a heathen of Africa, wild, ignorant, and brutal, is happier in his lawless freedom than the Southern slave. Such a position would cover its advocate with ridicule. As happiness is comparative, therefore, it cannot be doubted that the Southern negro may thank God for having cast his lot in a place where his condition is so much better than it could be in his native land.”

For every circumstance favourable to American character and institutions, even Basil Hall is good authority ; and, if we do not mistake, for we have not his work at hand, after becoming acquainted with the situation of the slaves in the South from personal observation, he declares, in so many words, that if it were in his power to do it, he would not give them their freedom.

It has been asked why the slaves occasionally run away from their masters if they are so happy ? Everybody knows that mankind, whether bond or free, are prone to become discontented with the station in which they are placed. Finding themselves not happy where they are, they long to seek happiness elsewhere, in some situation in which they fondly imagine it resides ; for every disappointment in the pursuit only increases our ardour to continue the game, and the last lesson of life is, that happiness is not to be found in this world. To chase it from one imaginary point to another ; to pursue it through every variety of pleasure and occupation, is the lot of man. No argument can therefore be drawn against any state of society, from the fact that many, or, if you please, all, are anxious to escape from it ; because, so long as there is one which seems to present greater allurements, it is the law of our nature to aspire

to its possession. Such is the longing of the slave to be free, because he imagines that, like his master, he will be a gentleman, and enjoy all the fancied delights of idleness and luxury. His absconding is therefore only a proof that, like all the rest of mankind, he is discontented with his lot, envies that of others, and runs the universal race after the same shadows that delude the world.

Do these pictures and this declaration of a prejudiced traveller accord with those of the abolitionists, or with the fictitious horrors with which slavery has been invested in the United States? On the contrary, do they not distinctly indicate that the benign spirit of religious and political liberty has operated here, as well as everywhere else, to mitigate the sufferings of mankind, and strip slavery of all its most obnoxious features? Compare the situation of the people described in the foregoing letters and extracts, with that of the class of Africans from whom they are descended; and for this purpose we shall lay before the reader some extracts from Mungo Park, who, it will be remembered, finally fell a victim to the treachery and barbarism of those who are now the objects of such intense sympathy.

It should be borne in mind that the slaves of the United States are the posterity of those Africans,

who, by capture in war, and other circumstances, had become hereditary bondmen in their own country, and whose posterity would have remained so to this day had they continued there. A comparison of their respective condition and treatment will therefore enable us to decide whether they have lost or gained by the transfer to this country, and consequently whether their happiness has been increased or diminished. Our object is not to challenge any credit to the free civilized white man of the United States, for treating his slaves more kindly than the African barbarian, but to show that nothing has been lost to the sum of human happiness by that transfer. The abolitionists rely on solitary cases, unsupported by any proof whatever; we shall adduce an example, on the testimony of one whose authority has never been questioned. It relates to a female slave of the tribe of the Jallonkas, and occurred while Mr. Park was travelling with a party through the wilderness of that name. They were pursued by a hostile tribe; many of their slaves were dispersed in the woods; a party was sent in search of them, and, among others, says Mr. Park—

“They likewise brought with them poor Nealee, whom they found lying in a rivulet. She was very much exhausted, and had crept to the stream in hopes to defend herself from the bees, by throwing

water over her body ; but this proved ineffectual, for she was stung in the most dreadful manner. When the slatees had picked out the stings as far as they could, she was cooled with water, and then rubbed with bruised leaves ; but the wretched woman obstinately refused to proceed farther, declaring she would rather die than walk another step. As entreaties and threats were used in vain, the whip was at length applied ; and after bearing patiently a few strokes, she started up and walked with tolerable expedition for four or five hours longer, when she made an attempt to run away from the cofle, but was so very weak that she fell down on the grass. Though she was unable to rise, the whip was a second time applied, but without effect ; upon which Karfa told two of the slatees to place her on the ass which carried our dry provisions ; but she could not sit erect, and the ass being very refractory, it was found impossible to carry her forward in that manner. The slatees were, however, most unwilling to abandon her, the day's journey being nearly ended ; they therefore made a sort of litter of bamboo canes, upon which she was placed, and tied with slips of bark ; this litter was carried on the heads of two slaves, one walking before the other, and they were followed by two others, who relieved them occasionally.

“At daybreak poor Nealee was awakened, but her limbs were now become so stiff and painful that she could neither walk nor stand; she was therefore lifted like a corpse upon the back of the ass, and the slatees endeavoured to secure her in that situation by fastening her hands together under the ass's neck, and her feet under the belly, with long strips of bark; but the ass was so very unruly, that no sort of treatment could induce him to proceed with his load; and as Nealee made no exertion to prevent herself from falling, she was quickly thrown off, and had one of her legs much bruised. Every attempt to carry her forward being thus found ineffectual, the general cry of the coffle was, *Kang-tegi Kang-tegi*, ‘cut her throat, cut her throat,’ an operation I did not wish to see performed, and therefore marched onward with the foremost of the coffle. I had not walked above a mile, when one of Karfa's domestic slaves came up to me with poor Nealee's garment upon the end of his bow, and exclaimed, *Nealee Affilita*—‘Nealee is lost.’ I asked him if the slatees had given him the garment as a reward for cutting her throat; he replied, that Karfa and the schoolmaster would not consent to that measure, but had left her on the road, where undoubtedly she soon perished, and was probably devoured by wild beasts.”

It will be alleged, and such has been the im

pression endeavoured to be produced by almost all the late writers on the subject of slavery, that this and similar instances of cruelty may be traced to the circumstance of the white people purchasing black slaves on the Coast of Africa. This has been held up as the only inducement to those wars among the natives, by which captives are acquired, and, of consequence, all the horrors attending the subsequent stages of slavery. Such, however, is not the case. Slavery, in its worst form, has existed to a great extent in Africa from the earliest ages, long previous to its introduction into Europe; and, according to the authority of Mr. Park, heretofore quoted, at this moment three fourths* of the negroes of Africa are in a state of hereditary bondage to a race of barbarians, whose temper and habits may be gathered from the following extracts from the same and various other writers:—

“We found many of the natives dressed in a thin French gauze, which they call *Bygui*; this being a light, airy dress, well calculated to display the shape of their persons, is much esteemed by the ladies. The manners of these females, however, did not correspond with their dress, for they

* Lander goes still farther, and estimates the slaves at four fifths of the whole number of inhabitants.

were rude and troublesome to the last degree. They surrounded me in numbers, begging for amber beads, &c., and were so vehement in their solicitations, that I found it impossible to resist them. They tore my cloak, cut the buttons from my boy's clothes, and were proceeding to other outrages, when I mounted my horse and rode off, followed for half a mile by a body of these harpies."

The following furnishes a still more striking exhibition of barbarism.

"While I was examining the countenance of this inhospitable old man, and endeavouring to find out the cause of the sullen discontent that was visible in his eye, he called to a slave who was working in a corn-field at a little distance, and ordered him to bring his paddle along with him. The Dooty then told him to dig a hole in the ground, pointing to a spot at no great distance. The slave, with his paddle, began to dig a pit in the earth, and the Dooty kept muttering and talking to himself until the pit was almost finished, when he repeatedly pronounced the word *Donkatoo*—good for nothing; *Jankra lemen*—a real plague—which expressions I thought could be applied to nobody but myself; and as the pit had very much the appearance of a grave, I thought it prudent to decamp,

when the slave, who had before gone to the village, to my surprise returned with the corpse of a boy, about nine years of age, quite naked. The negro carried the body by a leg and an arm, and threw it into the pit with a savage indifference which I had never before seen. As he covered the body, the Dooty often expressed himself *naphula littiniata*—money lost—whence I concluded the boy had been one of his slaves.”

The following examples of barbarous warfare are taken almost at random from the same work. Speaking of the siege of Sai, by the King of Bambarra, Mr. Park says :—

“After a siege of two months, the townspeople became involved in all the horrors of famine, while the king’s people were feasting in their trenches; they saw with pleasure the miserable inhabitants of Sai devour the leaves and bark of the Bentang-tree that stood in the middle of the town. Finding, however, the besieged would sooner perish than surrender, the king had recourse to treachery. He promised that, if they would open their gates, he would put no person to death, nor suffer any injury, but to the Dooty alone. The Dooty was sent accordingly, and immediately put to death. His son, in attempting to escape, was caught and massacred in the trenches; and the rest of the

townspeople were carried away captive, and sold as slaves to the different negro-traders."

In travelling from Farra to Balaba, he says—"I passed, in the course of this day, the ruins of three towns, the inhabitants of which were all carried away by Daisy, King of Kaarta, on the same day that he took and plundered Yamina." In addition to these exhibitions of the rankest barbarity, we learn, from a late traveller through the interior of Africa, that the King of Dahomey is engaged in perpetual wars, not only for the purpose of acquiring slaves, but with the pious object of watering the graves of his ancestors with the blood of his captives. The tombs, palaces, and temples of his capital are ornamented with the skulls and jaw-bones of his enemies captured in war; the floors of his private chambers and halls of audience paved, and the roof covered, with the like trophies of stupid, unfeeling barbarism; and it is considered a sufficient cause of war, that the graves of his ancestors require "more watering," or that his palace wants a new covering.

The same writer states, that on one occasion which came within his knowledge, three thousand victims were sacrificed at the grave of the mother of an Ashantee king, and two hundred slaves weekly, for the space of three months. These

two kingdoms were at that time entirely free from the influence of the foreign slave-trade ; the demand for slaves being consequently diminished, their value decreased in proportion, and they were thus wantonly sacrificed to "the genius of injured Africa." Shall we waste our sympathies on such remorseless barbarians, or weep that so many of their victims have found a refuge in the United States from such freedom as this ? shall we consummate our folly and weakness by placing our peace and union, our interests and happiness, in most imminent jeopardy, for the sake of experimenting on incurable barbarism and inflexible ignorance ?

In concluding his remarks on the condition of slaves in Africa, Mr. Park delivers the following opinion, which is recommended to the attention of the abolitionists, not for the purpose of defending the odious traffic in slaves by Christian nations, but simply as giving the result of the experience and reflections of the writer.

"Such are the general outlines of that system of slavery which prevails in Africa, and it is evident, from its nature and extent, that it is a system of no modern date. It probably had its origin in the remote ages of antiquity, before the Mahometans explored a path across the Desert. How far it is

maintained and supported by the slave traffic, which for two hundred years the nations of Europe* have carried on with the natives of the coast, it is neither within my province nor in my power to explain. If my sentiments should be desired concerning the effect which a discontinuance of this commerce would produce on the manners of the natives, I should have no hesitation in saying, that in the present unenlightened state of their minds, my opinion is, the effect would neither be so extensive or beneficial as many wise and worthy persons fondly expect."

What is the general state and condition of slaves in Africa, may be gathered from the following extracts from the same work :—

"But these restrictions on the power of the master extend not to the case of prisoners taken in war, nor to slaves purchased with money. All these unfortunate beings are considered as strangers and foreigners, who have no right to the protection of the law ; and may be treated with severity, or sold to a stranger, according to the pleasure of their owners. There are, indeed, regular markets, where

* For an historical detail of the origin and progress of this trade, the reader is referred to "A Twelvemonth's Residence in Jamaica, by R. R. Madden, M. D." England occupies a conspicuous place.

slaves of this description are bought and sold ; and the value of a slave in the eye of an African purchaser increases in proportion to the distance from his native kingdom ; for, when slaves are only a few days' journey from the place of their nativity, they frequently effect their escape ; but when one or more kingdoms intervene, escape being more difficult, they are more readily reconciled to their situation. On this account, the unhappy slave is frequently transferred from one dealer to another, until he has lost all hope of returning to his native kingdom. *The slaves which are purchased by Europeans on the coast are chiefly of this description.*"

"It is a known fact, that prisoners of war in Africa are the slaves of the conquerors ; and when the weak or unsuccessful warrior begs for mercy beneath the uplifted spear of his opponent, he gives up, at the same time, his claim to liberty, and purchases his life at the expense of his freedom."—
"A battle is fought ; the vanquished seldom think of rallying again ; the inhabitants become panic-struck ; and the conquerors have only to bind the slaves, and carry off their victims and their plunder. Such of their prisoners as through age or infirmity are unable to endure fatigue, or are found unfit for sale, are considered useless, *and I have no*

doubt are put to death. The same fate commonly awaits a chief, or any other person who has taken a distinguished part in the war."

The testimony of Park is more than corroborated by that of the Rev. Stephen Kay, "Corresponding Member of the South African Institution established for investigating the Geography, Natural History, and General Resources of South Africa," as will be seen by the following extracts from his travels and researches.

"Having to pass several small villages on our way, we had repeated opportunities of observing the servile respect which the lower orders pay to their chiefs. A slavish dread evidently pervades their minds when one of these feudal lords is seen approaching; nor is this surprising, seeing that both person and property are in a great measure at his command. The use that is sometimes made of this power is iniquitous in the extreme; and should the subject dare to withhold even his wife, when demanded, he thereby places himself in the most perilous situation."

"Every page of African history renders it abundantly evident, that misery and destruction are in all the ways of fallen man, and that to him the way of peace is altogether unknown. As in the western, so also in the southern division of this

dark continent, its numerous tribes and clans are continually feeding the vengeful flame. By predatory incursions alone, Caffraria has often been made a field of blood. Other causes indeed there are, from which strife, contention, and bloodshed have arisen; but in nine cases out of ten, at least, the native troops are mustered either to pillage their weaker neighbours, or to retaliate upon some thievish aggressor."

"Such being the estimate of life in general, the death of a female by violence attracts comparatively little attention. Previously to marriage she is regarded as a kind of marketable article, and valued according to the price she is likely to fetch when marriageable; subsequently to marriage the husband laments her loss, as the master would that of his slave whom he had bought and paid for. But, should she be a widow, her case is pitiable indeed, being without a protector through life, and seldom if ever the object of sympathy in death. Many of these poor creatures are hurried to an untimely end, unfollowed by a single sigh, much less a tear; and scarcely has the spirit taken its flight to the eternal world before beasts of prey are allowed, without molestation, to tear them limb from limb, and drag the bones to their dens. Many a horrid and heart-rending deed is hereby

placed beyond the power of human detection, and the murderer enabled effectually to elude the voice of blood.

“ ‘The infidelity of the Soolima women,’ says Major Laing, ‘is a never-failing source of litigation here, as in all other countries where, for want of being treated with due respect, they have no character to uphold. Like all other African females, they are loose in morals, as I could perceive from the numerous palavers which were brought before the king.’ This is precisely the case in every part of Kafferland; quarrels and prosecutions are continually springing from the very same source. On this subject, therefore, Barrow, who states that ‘instances of infidelity are said to be very rare; and, when they do occur, are accidental rather than premeditated,’ was evidently misinformed.”

“The last-mentioned chief, who in his lifetime had by such means sacrificed hundreds of his people, constituted, at the close of his pagan career, a most awful instance of the dreadful power of delusion: its influence seemed to grow stronger and stronger upon him as he himself became weaker. When greatly reduced, and consciously sinking under the virulence of his disorder, he mustered, in the service of the powers of dark-

ness, all the remaining strength he had, but would not listen to a single word respecting God or the eternal world. On hearing the name of Christ mentioned by Mr. C., who visited him just before he died, he instantly requested him to say no more upon that subject. Like the heathen kings of ancient days, 'in his disease he sought not unto the Lord, but to his physicians,'—to the wizards and soothsayers; and to them only would he lend an ear. 'These were repeatedly assembled; and when able, he danced before them most immoderately, and oftentimes until completely exhausted, in the hope thereby of rendering their incantations effectual. As usual, their orgies terminated in deeds of blood. When he was at the very point of entering the regions of death, his own son, treading in the aged sire's steps, laid violent hands upon one of his father's most favourite wives, and without any ceremony whatever, or the least sign of compunction, deliberately killed her upon the spot."

"On all occasions of this kind the poor women are perfect slaves. It was with an aching heart that I witnessed many aged females passing by, in the course of the day, having both heads and hands so heavily laden with hides, calabashes, and cooking utensils, &c., as to be scarcely able to move along. Thus circumstanced, great numbers doubt-

less fall into the hands of the enemy in times of war, for their husbands afford them no assistance or protection whatever. The preservation of the cattle constitutes the grand object of their solicitude; and with these, which are trained for the purpose, they run at an astonishing rate, leaving both wives and children to take their chance."

"This awful catastrophe was soon followed by others still more shocking. Suffering under the severe wound he had received, the enraged chief now seems to have concluded that all around him were enemies, and therefore determined on adopting measures the most desperate against both white and black. In the latter end of August, one division of his clan crossed the Zimvooboo, and by night fell upon some of the hamlets belonging to Umyeki. These they utterly destroyed, scarcely allowing a single man, woman, or child to escape. Setting fire to all the houses at once, the greater part perished in the flames; and those of the poor creatures that endeavoured to run off had hardly got clear of the devouring element before the spear found its way to their hearts."

"Their modes of torture are various, and, in some instances, indescribably horrid: the very idea of them produces in one's mind a chilling sensation. Some cases I have seen, and of others I

have heard; and many a time have I shuddered while witnessing their effects. These alone furnish proof sufficient that paganism is abhorrent in the extreme. Beating with the *induku*, or club, until the offenders are almost lifeless, is a comparatively mild measure. They are more frequently bound down, and tormented by means of large black ants, with which their bodies are literally covered from head to foot. Those who are doomed to undergo this process are first pinioned to the ground at full length, and in such a manner as to render it utterly impossible for them to move hand or foot: the poisonous swarm is then let loose upon them, and their stinging powers purposely stimulated. The eyes, the ears, and even the tongue, are all made to feel the painful smart, for the insects are not unfrequently forced into the mouth. In this way many a poor female is put upon the rack, and afterwards concealed in the lonely forest or cheerless dell until her wounded flesh is in some measure healed again.

“Roasting and branding come next in order, and constitute a fiery ordeal indeed. Posts are firmly fixed in the ground, at certain distances, and to these the culprit is tied with thongs, and with his arms and legs distended to the very uttermost. A fire is then made on each side of him, at his head

also, and likewise at his feet. Here he broils, and when he seems likely to expire amid the encompassing flame, the fires are partly removed; but it is only to 'shift the rack.' Hot stones are now applied to the breast, the abdomen, the inner parts of the thighs, or to the soles of the feet, which are thus burnt until the sinews shrink, and parts of the muscular system are completely destroyed."

"The Kaffer host had all this time hung back; and while the military were routing Matuwana and his warriors, they busily employed themselves in driving off all the cattle they could find, and in murdering the women and children. Previously to the attack being made, orders had indeed been given by the commanding officer, strictly prohibiting this barbarous kind of conduct: but he who lets the lion loose ought not to forget that he requires guarding. When the troops returned to the point whence they started, the field presented a scene indescribably shocking: old decrepit men, with their bodies pierced, and heads almost cut off; pregnant females ripped open; legs broken, and hands likewise severed from the arm, as if for the purpose of getting the armlets or some other trifling ornament; little children mutilated and horribly mangled; many in whom the spark of life had become quite extinct; some who were

still struggling in the agonies of death, and others nearly lifeless, endeavouring to crawl about among the dead. One of the soldiers, while crossing the valley, happened to observe a Kaffer intently engaged at a distance : he immediately advanced to see what he was about, and found the brutal savage deliberately cutting off the breasts of a helpless female, whom he had thrown down on the ground for the purpose. Without standing to ask any questions, he instantly levelled his piece, and shot the barbarian dead on the spot."

From these details it would seem sufficiently apparent, that humanity will have little cause to triumph in the abolition of slavery in the other quarters of the globe, while it continues to exist to such an extent in Africa, and while the ordinary state of society affords such spectacles of barbarity. It would only conduce to the multiplication of slaves at home, decrease their value, and, consequently, the interest of their masters to treat them well ; and finally, at length, when they would have more than they knew what to do with, entail upon the superfluous prisoners of war the fate of those " who, from age or infirmity, are of no value," and are put to death. Nothing but going to the fountain-head, and planting religion and civilization in Africa itself, can possibly cure the evil effectually. For this beneficent and noble pur-

pose, no plan was ever devised which promised so rational a triumph over barbarism and unbelief as the institution of the Colonization Society of the United States, which has been denounced by the abolitionists of England and America as an imposition on the world, calculated and intended to perpetuate the evils it professed to alleviate. That it would have been a long time in achieving its great objects, is, in the eyes of wise, reflecting persons, rather a recommendation than an objection, since all salutary changes in the economy of the world are brought about by slow degrees to an easy and almost imperceptible consummation. That it will ultimately succeed, is more than we can tell, for only time will disclose its final consequences. Still we maintain that it has all the attributes of a rational plan, depending for success on rational means, and sanctioned by rational anticipations as well as by actual experience. It is in itself the severest satire on the mad-headed schemes of the abolitionists ; and this may probably be one principal reason why they denounce it so vehemently, and, by persuasion as well as misrepresentation and calumny, endeavour to deter the blacks, bond as well as free, from snatching at the only practicable mode of really bettering their situation that was ever offered to their acceptance.

Let it be borne in mind. that we are now consid-

ering this subject, not with reference to any abstract principle of divine or natural law, but on the ground of its practical operation on the happiness of those concerned. For this purpose, and as the most certain mode of deciding the question, a comparison has been instituted between the situation of the natives of Africa, bond and free, and that of the slaves of the South. As equally applicable to the subject, the inquiry will be extended to the operatives in the English manufactories, to the peasantry of Europe, and the common day-labourers of the United States.

We learn from the reports of parliamentary committees, and various other sources equally authentic, that the operatives, as they are somewhat affectedly called, in the English manufactories, know not what it is to eat meat; that though they labour, the parent male and female, as well as their little children, from morning till night, and sometimes far into the night, their wages are insufficient to procure for them the necessaries of life, and that a large portion is compelled to resort to relief from the parish.* We farther learn, that the children are enslaved, to all intents and pur-

* We have been informed by a gentleman, once an eminent manufacturer in England, that, on more than one occasion, operatives have entreated to be employed by him, merely at the price of their daily food.

poses, by a system of incessant and unwholesome occupation the most rigid and severe ; that they are brought up in utter ignorance ; that their morals are entirely neglected, and that their very nature becomes degraded, their health in a great degree destroyed, by being thus thrust out from all means of mental improvement and healthful relaxation. The Parliament of England has lately interfered in behalf of these unfortunate white slaves, and, by a series of regulations, attempted to place them on a footing which might leave no ground for envying the condition of the black slaves of the South ; but no one can be ignorant of the futility of all attempts to restrain the cravings of interest and avarice, or to legislate for the domestic relations of social life. All these cravings operate with the master of the South to produce kind treatment to his slave, who, if he loses his health, not only becomes useless, but a burden ; and who, if he dies, is a serious loss. The employer of operatives in an English manufactory will naturally have no other object than to get from them the greatest possible degree of labour at the least possible expense. If he loses his health, it is nothing to him ; for he discharges the man, and gets another in his place. If the discharged labourer cannot maintain himself and family, he goes upon the parish ; and if he dies, it is no loss to

his employer. Every feeling of interest in the welfare of the two classes is therefore on the side of the slave. This feeling, aided by the impulses of the heart and the restraints of conscience, is alone capable of working a revolution in the private intercourse between the master and his family, the employer and the hireling. From all that can be learned, it appears that the legislative interference has produced no radical change: that neither the morals nor the condition of the operatives are improved; but that they still labour, without the adequate rewards of labour, and that a large portion of them is still compelled to resort to the parish, to eke out the scanty means of existence afforded by a life of incessant toil.

The father of a family goes forth by sunrise in the morning, accompanied by his children, to labour at their endless round in the manufactory, and returns in the evening, or late at night, not to enjoy, but to suffer, the fruits of his labour, in the midst of privations of every kind. His food is scanty and miserable, and for a part of this he pays by a degrading dependance on the parish, while his expectations of any future change for the better are as distant and hopeless as those of the hereditary bondman. Such a state must be fatal to his moral and domestic feelings; and all accounts go to prove their gradual decay among

these unfortunate people. The slave of the South is distinguished for the force of his attachments to his parents, his wife, and his children; but the common working-classes of England are notorious for their total disregard of these sacred feelings. It is stated, in various reports of commissions appointed for the express purpose of investigating the condition and morals of that class of people, that an almost total disregard of the marriage bond prevails among them; that their connexions are for the most part without the sanction of the marriage tie, and broken as caprice or convenience may dictate; that a general licentiousness of intercourse prevails; and that children are only considered as desirable, inasmuch as their multiplication increases the claims of their parents on the parish. All those ties which constitute the cement of social relations are either unfelt, or hang so loosely as to be discarded at pleasure, and the number of illegitimate children is multiplying in a manner which no previous age has exhibited.

Such is a mere skeleton of the evidence adduced from public reports of committees, either of parliament, corporations, or societies, and supported by the testimony of magistrates, schoolmasters, and parish ministers. They may possibly be exaggerated, for such is commonly the case with those exhibitions of misery, ignorance, and crime, which are

put forth to the world for the purpose of obtaining its agency in mitigating or removing them. But, making all allowances, enough remains to show that, both as regards his morals and his means of happiness, the slave of the South is in a state to be envied by the philanthropic paupers of England, who, we perceive, have held meetings, expressing their deep indignation at the existence of slavery in the West Indies and the United States.

Nor are the other classes of labourers in Great Britain more to be envied by the Southern slave than the operatives in the manufactories. How many thousands of them pass their lives in the coal and tin mines, shut from the light of day, and the sprightly, wholesome air, exposed to those dreadful catastrophes which, at intervals, bury perhaps hundreds in the ruins of an explosion? Do these people pretend to sympathize with our negroes? Without multiplying examples, it is sufficient to state, what is openly asserted by English authorities, that throughout all the different classes of labour, the absence of what the slaves of the South, and their masters too, consider the ordinary and indispensable comforts of life, is a subject of universal notoriety.

Is it for such a country, and such a people, to boast of their freedom, simply because they may

not be bought and sold? Does the miserable affectation of liberty, which the operatives in manufactories, and the labourers in mines, and everywhere else, suffer, give them any essential superiority over the well-fed, well-housed, and well-treated slave? What are the privileges of one of these pauper labourers? To work all day for a master he dare not disobey, and then beg of the parish a pittance to keep himself and family from starving. It is true, he can go elsewhere in search of another master; but, wherever he goes, unless perchance he seeks this country of "two-legged wolves," of "atheists and blasphemers," the same fate awaits him. To be transported to Botany Bay for shooting or snaring a hare or a partridge; to pay taxes on the light of the sun, the air he breathes, the ground he treads, and the fire he burns; to have no more influence in the choice of his rulers, or the making of laws, in fact, than the hereditary slave; to be obliged to work harder than the slave, without sharing any of his comforts, or being relieved from any of his burdens; and finally, as is the case with millions of Irish labourers, to suffer and starve without any other than the forlorn hope of being liberated from his thralldom by Mr. O'Connell, in return for the "tribute" he pays him out of the superfluity of his wants, and the munificence of his penury. A reference to the condition of the low-

er classes of England and Ireland naturally leads to a suspicion, that the present outcry against slavery in that quarter partly originated from an apprehension that the hard-slaving and half-starved operatives and working-men of those philanthropic countries might, if they knew the real state of the case, flock hither in thousands, and sell themselves to the planters of the South, instead of being compelled, as they frequently are, to commit crimes, in order to entitle themselves to a refuge in the Paradise of Botany Bay.*

The condition of the peasantry of Germany has been much ameliorated by the regulations of Maria Theresa, Joseph the Second, and, most especially, by the gradual progress of more humane and enlarged views on the part of the landholders, without whose cordial co-operation all laws are nugatory. In the various states composing this great and powerful empire, there are, of course, sensible varieties in the condition of the peasantry and labouring classes, and to particularize them all would be tedious and unnecessary. We shall select those of the ancient kingdom of Hungary, where the rights of the peasantry rest on an ordinance of Maria Theresa, called "*The Urbarium* ;

* The criminal courts in England often present such examples.

or Contract between the Landlords and Peasants, as fixed by Law." The following items, selected from under the head "*Of things forbidden to the Peasants, and of the punishments ensuing thereon,*" will give the reader a tolerable insight into the situation of that class of people.

"The peasants are forbid to collect money or natural productions, and the offenders are to be punished with twenty-four strokes of the cane."

"The peasants are not allowed to collect *Knopp-ern Galls*, nor to knock down acorns, as they belong entirely to the landlord; but it is prohibited as contraband, and the offenders are further to be punished with three days hand labour."*

"Peasants are not to carry a gun, nor to keep sporting dogs, under penalty of three days hand labour."

"When a peasant, out of idleness and carelessness, after being called to his service, does not come to it, he is to be punished with twelve strokes of a cane."

"If any peasant shall sell flesh-meat from another place, or cut up and sell flesh-meat, thereby taking away the profits of the shambles from the landlord, this shall be considered as contraband,

* In contradistinction to labour with his team of oxen or horses.

and the peasant shall be further punished with three days hand labour."

"The widows of deceased peasants must observe the order of the twenty-first article of the seventh of King Uladislaus, which orders that, if they marry again, they must not quit their homes without permission of their landlord, otherwise their whole property shall be at his disposal."

"The peasants of Hungary could formerly leave their landlord at pleasure. This liberty was granted by a great many laws of the land, as by the sixth article of the second decree, and the fourteenth of the third decree of Sigismond, in the year 1405; the thirty-fourth of 1550; the twenty-seventh of 1566; and several others. This liberty, under Uladislaus, was taken from all those who suffered themselves to be drawn into the rebellion of that time. From this circumstance the Hungarian nobility has in after times *determined on their bondage*, which indeed not everywhere, but in the greatest part of the kingdom, is introduced."*

When the reader is informed that the whole of the landed property of Hungary, and, with the exception of the commercial cities, nearly all that of Germany, belongs to the nobility, which still re-

* Rosenmann's Staatstrecht, p. 193.

tains a large portion of the despotic prerogatives of the feudal system, he will be able to comprehend what share of personal, civil, or political rights falls to the lot of the peasant. The truth is, his situation is decidedly worse than that of a slave in the United States. In the first place, he is equally in bondage; in the second, he possesses no property in the soil, nor can he acquire any; in the third place, he is obliged to contribute a large portion of his labour, and the products of his labour, to the service of his landlord, and maintain himself and family besides; and, in the fifth place, he is equally subjected to stripes, and imprisonment in irons, at the discretion of a baronial court, the officers of which are dependants of the landlord. The consequence of all this is a degree of extreme and abject poverty, that would be insufferable but for the universal solace of music, which seems to supply the place of freedom and competency.* Hence we see them, whenever they are at liberty and can find the means, flocking to this country, where they and their descendants constitute a considerable portion of our most valuable and industrious citizens. Generally speaking, throughout all Germany, the feudal maxims and habits have been less affected by the progress of human

* See Bright's Travels in Germany.

freedom in Europe, than in the southern portion of that quarter of the world. The pride of birth, and the privileges of feudality, are still retained in all the vigour of ages of barbarism ; and, wherever this is the case, ignorance, poverty, and oppression are the only birthright of the labouring classes. Surely there is a glaring inconsistency in affecting such exclusive sympathy for the wrongs of the African, while holding their own peculiar race, their brethren of the same nation and colour, in a rigid and inflexible bondage, which has all the restraints and degradation, without any of the advantages, of a state of slavery.

The condition of the Russian peasantry is thus briefly described by Mr. Coxe, a traveller of the highest reputation for accuracy and learning :—

“Peasants belonging to individuals are the private property of the landholders, as much as implements of agriculture or herds of cattle ; and the value of an estate is estimated, as in Poland, by the number of boors, not by the number of acres.”

Speaking of the consequences resulting from certain regulations of Peter the Great, Mr. Coxe observes :—

“These circumstances occasion a striking difference in the state of the Russian and Polish peasants, even in favour of the latter, who in other re-

spects are more wretched. If the Polish boor is oppressed, and escapes to another master, the latter is liable to no pecuniary penalty for harbouring him ; but, in Russia, the person who receives another's vassal is subject to a heavy fine. With respect to his own demands upon his peasants, the lord is restrained by no law, either in the exaction of any sum or in the mode of employing them. He is absolute master of their time and their labour : some he employs in agriculture ; a few he makes his menial servants, and perhaps without wages ; and from others he exacts an annual payment. Several instances of these exactions fell under my observation ; a mason, who was rated at six pounds sterling per annum ; a smith, at twelve ; and others as high as twenty. With regard to any capital they may have acquired by their industry, it may be seized, and there is no redress ; as, according to the old feudal law which still exists, a slave cannot institute a process against his master. Hence it occasionally happens, that several peasants who have gained a large capital cannot purchase their liberty for any sum, because they are subject, as long as they continue slaves, to be pillaged by their masters."*

These, we presume, are extreme cases, and such

* Coxe's Travels in Russia, vol. iii., p. 177, 8, 9.

are always rare. We know that the condition of the Russian peasantry has been much ameliorated of late years, and, in all probability, will be more so, under the salutary influence of legal restrictions, and, above all, of humane and enlightened views on the part of their masters. Still the reader cannot but perceive that the situation of the Russian boor, as regards his civil rights, is not superior to that of the Southern slave in any one point of comparison. What his condition is in regard to the comforts of life, will be seen by the following extract from the work we have just quoted:—

“The Russian peasants appeared in general a large, coarse, hardy race, and of great bodily strength. Their dress is a round hat or cap, with a very high crown, a coarse robe of drugget (or, in winter, of sheepskin, with the wool turned inwards), reaching below the knee, and bound round the waist by a sash; trousers of linen almost as thick as sackcloth; a woollen or flannel cloth wrapped round the leg, instead of stockings; sandals woven from strips of a pliant bark, and fastened by strings of the same material, which are afterwards twined round the leg, and serve as garters to the woollen or flannel wrappers. In warm weather, the peasants frequently wear only a short coarse shirt and trousers.

“ Their cottages are built in the same manner as those of Lithuania, but larger, and somewhat better provided with furniture and domestic utensils. They are of a square shape, formed of whole trees, piled upon one another, and secured at the four corners, where their extremities meet, with mortices and tenons. The interstices between these piles are filled with moss. Within, the timbers are smoothed with the axe, so as to form the appearance of a wainscot; but without, are left with the bark in their rude state. The roofs are in the penthouse form, and generally composed of the bark of trees or shingles, which are sometimes covered with mould or turf. The peasants usually construct the whole house solely with the assistance of the hatchet, and cut the planks of the floor with the same instrument, being in many parts unacquainted with the use of the saw. They finish the shell of the house before they begin to cut the windows and doors. The windows are openings of a few inches square; and the doors are so low as not to admit a middle-sized man without stooping. Most of these huts are only of one story; a few of them contain two rooms, the generality only one.”*

Being on one occasion waked up by an irruption

* Coxe's Travels in Russia, vol. i., p. 335, 6, 7.

of a party of hogs into the hut where he had taken up his night's lodging, at the village of Tabluka, the following group presented itself to the traveller:—

“My two companions were stretched on the same parcel of straw from which I had just emerged; a little beyond them our servants occupied a similar heap; at a small distance three Russians, with long beards, and coarse sackcloth shirts and trousers, lay extended on their backs upon the floor; on the opposite side of the same room, three women in their clothes slumbered on a long bench; while the top of the stove afforded a couch to a woman, dressed, like the others, and four sprawling children, almost naked.”

“The food of the peasants is black rye bread, eggs, salt fish, bacon, mushrooms; their favourite dish is a kind of hodge-podge, made of salt or fresh meat, groats, and rye flour, highly seasoned with onions and garlic, which latter ingredients are much used by the Russians.”

Assuredly these sketches present nothing which the slave of the United States has any just cause to envy; and when we consider that the Russian, Polish, Hungarian, and other peasants in various parts of the North of Europe, although in a state of actual bondage, or nearly approaching it, are

still obliged to maintain themselves and families, while the bondman of the United States is free from all obligation or anxiety on that head, it seems impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion that the condition of the latter is decidedly preferable to that of the former.

With regard to the situation of the peasantry and labouring men of those portions of Europe where they are not considered as the actual property of the feudal lord, all accounts go to prove that it is not such as to challenge the envy of a well-treated slave. While the slave runs away from his master, the former abandon their country, and sever all the attachments of youth and memory, all the ties of kindred and patriotism, to come to this land of "two-legged wolves," of "hypocrites and blasphemers." Nothing but oppression and suffering can work such effects on the deep-rooted feelings and principles of the human heart; and hence we have a right to conclude, that this voluntary exile is the result of one or both of these causes.

It would far exceed our limits were we to enter, as we are fully prepared to do, into separate and distinct sketches of the condition of the peasantry and working-classes of the South of Europe. It is sufficient for our present purpose to state the result of statistical researches and inquiries now

before the public. From these we learn, that the number of paupers in Europe, independently of Great Britain, is estimated at eleven millions ; that the number of those whom the least remission of labour, or diminution of wages, or of the product of their toils, would at once reduce to want, is fifty millions ; and the number of actually indigent, seventeen millions. Everywhere the roadside is infested with clamorous beggars of all sizes and ages ; and we learn from Mr. Leckie,* that in the Island of Sicily, where, such is the luxurious soil and genial climate, that the mariner scents his approach by the fragrance of the flowers even before it becomes visible to the eye, the abject poverty of the villagers in the interior is so great, that they quarrel with each other for the very bones which the traveller throws away. Among the slaves of the United States are neither paupers or beggars ; want never approaches their doors ; and of all the labouring men of this world, they are the most free from the besetting evils of laborious poverty. We disclaim all intention of throwing censure or obloquy on any government, or interfering with the condition of those peasants whose situation has been sketched. We are fighting on the defensive,

* See his account of that island, published some years since.

and our sole purpose here is to sooth the exquisitely sensitive feelings of the "friends of the entire human race," by showing them that there are millions of white people more than equally entitled to their sympathy, to whom emancipation would be the prelude to better times, and an amalgamation that would not degrade the race to which we belong.

It is with mingled feelings of gratitude and pride that we place the situation of the labouring classes of the United States side by side with that of those of the philanthropic governments of Europe who take so deep an interest in the welfare of the Southern slave. It is in the United States alone that labour claims and receives its adequate rewards; or that the labourer can indulge any other anticipation than that of endless toil, from youth to manhood, from manhood to old age, from old age to the grave. It is here alone that all may rationally aspire to plenty of wholesome food, and all the essential comforts of life, crowned in the end by competence and independence. It is here alone, of all the civilized regions of the earth, that he equally shares the opportunities of fortune and the rights of a citizen. All our own observation and experience, and all the testimony even of the most prejudiced and unfriendly travellers, combines to

support the assertion that, as respects the essentials of comfort, the labouring classes of our country are far beyond the rest of the world. They are consequently happier, because they possess those means of existence which are indispensable to all classes of mankind, in a greater degree than do the same classes elsewhere.

But the penalty of Adam follows his posterity everywhere. Misfortune, sickness, extravagance, indolence, and crime, produce similar results all over the world. And thus it happens, even in the United States, that many, very many labourers and hirelings are reduced to want, and suffer all its miseries; for they have no master whose duty and interest it is to take care of them, or shield their families from hunger, cold, and distress. The world is their master, and a hard master it is in most cases. Those who, from want of foresight or economy, or from sickness, or the number of their children, have not been able to save any thing for a rainy day, suffer much when the frosts of winter, or a sudden cessation of the demand for their labour, or the incapacity to work, throws them out of employment, and consequently out of bread. There is hardly a winter passes that we are not applied to in behalf of these sufferers, and, judging from the large sums contributed, their numbers

must be very great. In the city of New-York, most especially, owing to the vast rise of real property, and the universal fashion of building large, expensive houses, a large portion of the labouring classes cannot now afford to hire a house to themselves. They are gradually obliged to be content with single rooms, in which very often more than one family is crowded together, to the utter contamination of morals and decency, and may now be said to have no home. In addition to this, it is notorious to all who have instituted the comparison, that the white hireling labourers work much harder than the slaves of the South; that, while thus employed, they are not a whit more at liberty, and though they may not be beaten, may be discharged at pleasure by their employer. If they are more free in the intervals of employment than the Southern slave, it is for the most part the freedom of expensive and pernicious indulgences, that corrupt their morals, beggar their families, and ruin their constitutions. These circumstances, though they may not—and God forbid they should—bring down this class of people in our country to the level of the African, bond or free, may still serve to show that, deplorable as it may be considered, the state of the Southern slave, is not without some very material advantages over that of the hireling.

The great superiority of the latter consists in being a free man in a free country.

It can scarcely have escaped the notice of those who have watched the course of argument adopted by the abolitionists in England, and echoed by their humble followers in this country, that it tends directly to confound the claims of the slaves of the South with the rights of the free citizens of the United States. The association is certainly highly complimentary, and we shall endeavour to vindicate the latter from the consequences of this happy analogy. These advocates of all sorts of freedom except that of their own countrymen distinctly insinuate, that the same arguments which sustain the rights of free white men are equally applicable to the African slave, and, consequently, that our people are guilty of gross hypocrisy in affecting to maintain the principles of universal liberty while they hold the blacks in bondage.

It has been our object in the preceding chapters to exhibit the insuperable difficulties, as well as deplorable consequences, of immediate, or even gradual emancipation, in the present state of African intelligence. We have also taken occasion, at different times, to indicate the radical difference between emancipating bondmen, and simply restoring subjects or citizens to a participation of

civil rights. The distinction is of vital importance, inasmuch as it involves the honour of our country, and it will now be our endeavour to make it more clearly apparent to our readers. There may, at first sight, appear a striking analogy, but we think it can be demonstrated that there is a radical and irreconcilable difference in the two cases.

In the first place, the distinction between the different orders of white men in Europe is entirely artificial. They are identified in all the peculiar characteristics which mark them originally the same. Nothing, therefore, is wanting to constitute a homogeneous people, but an equal distribution of civil and political rights. Disparity in education, manners, and dress, constitutes the sole difference between the democracy and aristocracy of all countries. Remove this, and nothing remains to distinguish one from the other. Such, however, is not the case with the distinction of colour, which is palpable to our sense, and cannot be mistaken. It is a natural distinction, and nothing but unnatural desires, or absolute necessity on the part of the whites, has ever produced an amalgamation between the two colours. The contrast of colour, to say nothing of the hair, the odour, and other distinguishing peculiarities of the African, mark him out wheresoever he goes ; he

cannot become a white man by any acquisition of knowledge or refinement ; nor can the white man become black, however he may descend to the level of blacks. The physical disparities, setting aside all others, between the two races, are equivalent to those which separate various species of animals, whose natural instincts are the same, for aught we can discover, yet which never incorporate by choice. The white and black races of men are probably the nearest to each other of all these varieties ; but they are not homogeneous, any more than the orang-outang, the ape, the baboon, and the monkey, who possibly may, ere long, find a new sect of philanthropists to sustain their claim to amalgamation. By a series of condescensions of this kind, who shall say that the noble race of the white man may not in good time verify the theory of my Lord Monboddo, and strut about with tails ?

The radical distinction produced by the contrast of colour between man and man is exemplified in the fact, that in no age or nation have they ever thoroughly amalgamated, even where the African was not degraded by bondage. Individual cases have occurred, it is true, but the result has always been the same, namely, the production of an inferior race. Wherever they have associated as equals, it has been as open or secret enemies ; and

we hold it to be an axiom demonstrated by all past experience, that as equals, and in equal numbers, they can never live together in peace. One or other must be subjugated. If, then, the masters of the South were to liberate their slaves in a body, or even by slow degrees, without expelling them at the same time from the states in which they reside, the consequence would soon be, a struggle for power, and a civil war of the worst description.

In the second place, the distinction of a bondman in the United States, and the subject of a king, is strongly marked by another feature, which destroys their identity. So also, in a much greater degree, is that between the former and a free citizen of the United States. Our ancestors brought with them to the New World the rights of Englishmen, and sustained a seven years war to maintain them. They earned the lands they occupy by the fruits of their labour and their valour. The African slave, on the contrary, came hither without any rights derived from his own country, for he had forfeited them by capture in war, or by inheritance; and he has acquired none here. So far from assisting in the attainment of our independence, the slaves became the instruments of most serious mischief; and, to use the words of the Virginia declaration of 1776, "were prompted to rise in

arms among us—those very negroes whom, by an inhuman use of his prerogative, he” (the British king) “has refused us permission to exclude by law.” Neither by birth, by inheritance, by public services, nor by any natural or acquired claim, have the slaves of the United States any right to the privileges of free citizens of the United States, by whom alone liberty was achieved, and who alone are entitled to its blessings, on the ground of principles recognised by all civilized nations.

Every native of England is in like manner entitled, by a natural indefeasible right, to all the privileges belonging to that particular class to which he appertains, unless they are forfeited by crime. His ancestors won these privileges, and transmitted them to their posterity. So with every nation on earth. There must always be a distinction between those who have acquired or inherited political and civil rights, and the stranger who comes among them. He cannot be supposed to feel the same attachment to the soil, the people, and the government, with those who are familiarized to them from their birth; nor can he be relied on as their defender, until he has identified himself with the interests of his adopted country, by the acquisition of property. Even then he is scarcely to be trusted in a contest with his native

land. By the law of England, as declared of late years, a slave becomes free the moment he lands in that country. If, however, two or three millions of slaves were suddenly to make their appearance in a body, it is, we think, somewhat more than doubtful whether my Lord Mansfield's decision would not be speedily reversed. What may be safely done with the few, is often either dangerous or impracticable with the many. It might answer for a boast, but would not do to practise too extensively on the flourish of Counsellor Curran, that the moment a man "touches the sacred soil of Britain," &c., "he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disinthralled," &c., &c., lest the operatives in the manufactories, the Irish peasantry, and other white-skinned slaves, might mistake, and think they were included in the general denomination of men. The maxim is only intended for the negroes.

In the third place, the lower orders of England and Europe can only acquire equal rights with the higher, by their own exertions, which presupposes a degree of intelligence that in a great measure fits them for the enjoyment of freedom. They are prepared for this by gradual advances in knowledge; whereas the plan of the abolitionists is to free the slaves of the South at once, with-

out any preparatory steps to enable them to sustain their new duties, or enjoy their new acquisition.

Again; we acknowledge the situation of the peasantry and working classes of England, and the greater portion of Europe, to be bad enough, when compared with that of our own people of the same classes. Still, however, there are striking differences between them and our African bondmen, although, beyond doubt, on the whole, the state of the latter is preferable. The white men of Europe, whatever situation they may occupy, are not designated on their very faces as separate and distinct races by the great Creator of mankind. They may easily and naturally, without force or persuasion, and by gradual approaches, become one and the same, as in the United States, where there is no distinction of ranks. Their enfranchisement will lead to an equality in so far as is compatible with the system of Providence, without at once uprooting and destroying the whole frame of society, revolutionizing all the domestic relations, and producing two equal hostile parties, for ever separated by impassable barriers.

The people, more especially of England, are not only gradually becoming qualified for freedom by the progress of intelligence, but are already conversant with those habits which enable men to

direct their own conduct and that of their children. Although they may work like our slaves, and fare worse than they do, still they are accustomed to superintend their families; to purchase and sell; to provide for themselves; and to cope with that hydra-headed monster called the world, without which experience a free-man is little else than a prey to roguery, in all its numberless forms and disguises. They have also, many of them, if not all, at some time or other, held property, real or personal, and accustomed themselves to its management. They are likewise supported by the habitual feeling, that notwithstanding the usurpations of aristocracy, they are and always have been equal as men, though their rights are unequal. On the contrary, the bondman is in a great measure destitute of this preparatory experience, as well as habitual feeling of equality. He cannot divest himself of the sense of inferiority, unless by an effort which makes him insolent and ungovernable. Hence, in the States of Pennsylvania and New-York, where thousands of negroes, either runaways or voluntarily emancipated, are admitted to all the privileges of freemen, a melancholy course of experience has shown that scarcely one in a hundred is capable of rationally using the blessing. They have abused, not enjoy-

ed it. A large portion has died miserably ; equal numbers have become the habitual inmates of bridewells, penitentiaries, hospitals, and state prisons ; and of the remainder, few, very few, are either moral in their conduct, decent in their manners, or respectable in their situation. The great mass remain sad monuments of hopes which can never be realized ; victims to the grand experiment of severing the relations between master and slave, without investigating the capacity of the latter to provide for himself and family, acting the part of a good neighbour and useful citizen, or sustaining any one single duty thus cast upon him by the misguided zeal of hot-brained fanaticism, or assumed by his own temerity. In short, to set the slaves of the South at once, or at any time, free, must inevitably produce similar consequences to those which would result from suddenly withdrawing children from under the wing of the parent, and setting them adrift on the ocean of the world, without experience and without protection.

We might enumerate various other important points of difference, which would go to overthrow the position that there is a violent and glaring inconsistency in boasting of the freedom of our institutions, while holding the Africans in bondage, and asserting equal rights in the face of such glaring

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inequalities. The apprehension of extending this inquiry to a tedious length, prevents our enlarging further on this head. It is believed enough has been said to satisfy all impartial inquirers, that the good people of the United States are not "blasphemers and hypocrites," "two-legged wolves," "ruthless tigers," "man-stealers and murderers," because one portion will not consent to a measure equally unpracticable and mischievous, as fatal to the existence of that union which is the main pillar of our prosperity, happiness, and glory; and the other voluntarily and at once not only relinquish a large portion of their property, but, at the same time, render the remainder, as well as their own lives and those of their families, the sport of millions of manumitted paupers, destitute of property, and as ignorant of their rights and their duties as they are incapable of maintaining an independent existence. Almost the only argument those who oppose the emancipation of the lower orders in Europe now venture to urge against such a measure, is, that they are utterly unfit for the enjoyment of liberty. How much more forcibly does this apply to the slaves of the United States, who, in their present state, are still more disqualified, and whom the enjoyment of freedom, as well as the opportunities of gaining knowledge, serve only thus far,

at least, to demonstrate their incapacity to make a proper use of the one, or to acquire the other.

That we are not speaking at random, or under the influence of prejudice, when we maintain the natural and incurable inferiority of the woolly-headed race, will appear from the following extract of a letter from one of the "*visitors*," whose duty it is to attend the examination of the common schools of this city, where the black children, though not actually amalgamated with the white, receive precisely the same instruction. Nay, they are even more particularly attended to, from being the subjects of a philanthropic experiment.

"In answer to your inquiry what my observations have been in relation to the comparative intellect of white and coloured children, I will remark, that I have visited the Public and African schools in this city, and frequently examined the scholars, of both sexes and of different ages, and I have uniformly found them inferior to the whites, possessing the same advantages of instruction, in every branch of education which required *mental effort*. In writing and painting, they bear a tolerable comparison; but *in reading, grammar, geography, and, more particularly, arithmetic, re-*

quiring the greatest mental effort, they are vastly below the level of a comparison.

"My candid opinion is, that the coloured or African population cannot, by any code of laws, by any system of education, or by any habits, customs, or manners, be raised to an equality with the whites, either in general knowledge, or those particular branches which are essential to the ordinary pursuits of life, and the prosperity of individuals."

Not even Sir Robert Filmer, who maintains that the desire of liberty caused the fall of Adam, has ventured to insinuate such an incurable incapacity in any order of white men. All history and experience would have contradicted him, by citing a thousand illustrious examples to prove, that nothing is required but equal opportunities to level all the distinctions of rank and birth. But history will be searched in vain for similar triumphs of the woolly-headed race. They seem equally wanting in the powers of the mind, and in the energy to exert them; and not all the discouragements under which they labour can account for this contrast, without the aid of a radical inferiority. It is therefore not without ample reason, that anatomists and physiologists have classed the negro as the lowest in the scale of rational beings.

CHAPTER X.

Of the Fanaticism of the Abolitionists, and its hostility to Religion, Morals, Liberty, Patriotism, and the Social Virtues.

WE shall finish our task by attempting an analysis of the nature, spirit, and consequences of that reckless spirit of fanaticism, which, instigated and directed, there is too much reason to suspect, by the cool, deliberate cunning of interested hypocrisy, is now waging intestine war against the laws, the constitution, and the rights of property in the United States. Scorning all decency of discussion, all regard to public decorum and the feelings of those who chance to stand in the way of their impracticable philanthropy; deriding all social duties and sympathies, all feelings of patriotism; instigating an ignorant population of millions of blacks to insurrection; sowing the seeds of a servile war; and last and worst of all, converting the precepts of Holy Writ into an excuse for violating its spirit and doctrines, it, as it were, snatches a burning brand from the throne of God, to set fire to our in-

stitutions and consume our Union to ashes. Still worse than this, if possible. By thus prostituting the Old and New Testaments to sanction its mischievous purposes, and by using them as the sponsors of its war against our social institutions as well as constitutional safeguards, it is making religion itself so odious in the eyes of rational and temperate men, that it is to be feared they may be wrought upon to abjure a faith thus at war with the laws and institutions of society, and seek refuge from the red-hot fires of fanaticism in the chill, dark caverns of frozen unbelief.

The Bible, as understood and acted upon for ages, is no longer the settled rule of faith to those marauders and moss-troopers of religion, who pay no respect whatever to venerable interpretations grown gray in the lapse of time. Its morals are not sufficiently sublimated for the exquisite squeamishness of modern philanthropy; and it would appear that God himself has changed, since he stood on Mount Sinai in all the majesty of Omnipotence, and gave laws to the universe. The sect of fanatics has no rule of faith; no standard authority; no teacher, whose lessons are hallowed by the belief of ages; no pastor, who seems to have any guide but his own wild vagaries, or any other restraint but that of his own consummate arrogance.

Every day the path of our duties is beset with new thorns and briers, and becomes more difficult to pursue. The yoke of religion is waxing more heavy and galling, and, as a natural and inevitable result, men are beginning to cast it off as too intolerable to be borne, or resorting to hypocrisy to cloak their apostacy. It is much to be feared, that if the tyranny of fanaticism continues much longer, the Christian world will be divided into two sects, namely, fanatics, who believe every thing, and infidels, who believe nothing. Let us once more return to the good old fold, where the shepherd was not the tyrant, but the teacher of his flock; where the sheep were permitted to indulge their innocent gambols, and where, if sheared at all, it was only once a year. It is time, and high time, that there should be some strong effort among rational and pious men to restore the prostrated landmarks of our rights and our duties; to reinstate the God of Moses and the Saviour of mankind in their ancient dignities as the Lawgivers of Christians, and to rescue our people, most especially our mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters, from the delusions of fanaticism. It is for this purpose we have come forth to give our humble aid, in pointing out the consequences of these daring and licentious innovations on the ancient

rules of our faith, and the established principles of our government.

Of all the forms under which fanaticism has appeared, that assumed by the abolitionists is the most dangerous to the existence of civil government and the principles of liberty, in their enlarged and liberal construction. Having, at a meeting in the city of London, denounced the Colonization Society as a cheat and a hypocrite, they commenced their operations in the United States, in the city of Philadelphia, by organizing a National Anti-Slavery Society, which began its career with a declaration of exterminating warfare against the people of the South, the rights of property, the majesty of the law, and the Constitution of the United States. That our readers, who perhaps have never seen this celebrated manifesto, may judge of the tone, temper, and objects of the society, we here insert it at full length. Its positions, it will be perceived, are as little encumbered by argument as they are embarrassed by modesty; and the language is such as only arrogant, conceited, ignorant, and impudent impostors, or foaming madmen would dare to address to their countrymen.

“ We maintain, that in view of the civil and religious privileges of this nation, the guilt of its oppression is unequalled by any other on the face

of the earth ;—and, therefore, that it is bound to repent instantly, to undo the heavy burden, to break every yoke, and to let the oppressed go free.

“ We further maintain, that every man has a right to his own body, to the products of his own labour, to the protection of law, and to the common advantages of society. It is piracy to buy or steal an African, and subject him to servitude. Surely the sin is as great to enslave an American as an African. That every American citizen who retains a single human being in involuntary bondage is, according to the Scripture, a man-stealer ; that the slaves ought to be instantly set free, and brought under the protection of law ; that all those laws which are now in force, admitting the right of slavery, are, therefore, before God, utterly null and void ; being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative, a daring infringement on the law of nature, a base overthrow of the very foundations of the social compact, a complete extinction of all the social relations, endearments, and obligations of mankind, and a presumptuous transgression of the holy commandments ; and that, therefore, they ought to be instantly abrogated.

“ We further affirm, that all persons of colour who possess the necessary qualifications which

are demanded of others, ought to be admitted forthwith to the enjoyment of the same privileges, and the exercise of the same prerogatives, as others; and that the paths of preferment, of wealth, and of intelligence, should be opened as widely to them as to persons of a white complexion.

“ We maintain that no compensation should be given to the planters emancipating their slaves. We regard as delusive, cruel, and dangerous, any scheme of expatriation which pretends to aid, either directly or indirectly, in the emancipation of the slaves, or to be a substitute for the immediate and total abolition of slavery. This relation to slavery is criminal and full of danger; it must be broken up.

“ We shall organize Anti-Slavery Societies, if possible, in every city, town, and village of our land. We shall send forth agents to lift up the voice of remonstrance, of warning, of entreaty, and rebuke. We shall circulate, unsparingly and extensively, anti-slavery tracts and periodicals. We shall enlist the pulpit and the press in the cause of the suffering and the dumb. We shall aim at a purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery. We shall encourage the labour of freemen over that of slaves, by giving a preference to their productions, and we

shall spare no exertions nor means to bring the whole to a speedy repentance.

“These are our views and principles—these our designs and measures. With entire confidence in the overruling justice of God, we plant ourselves upon the truths of divine revelation as upon the everlasting rock.”

Here is an exterminating warfare declared against the people, the civil institutions, the laws, and the Constitution of the United States. The entire white population of a large portion of the country are denounced as “man-stealers,” the punishment of whose crime is death by the law of God, unless they “instantly” emancipate their slaves, who, by a direct and irresistible inference, are authorized to inflict the penalty. Next, a peremptory demand, that each and every one of these slaves shall be “instantly” set free, and admitted to “the same privileges and exercise the same prerogatives” as their masters; “that the path of preferment, of wealth, and of intelligence, shall be opened as widely to them as to persons of a white complexion.” Next, that the owners of a species of property, guarantied by the constitution and the laws, shall receive no compensation for being despoiled of it. Next, that all means will be resorted to in order to discourage the sale and purchase of such

productions of the southern states as are the fruits of slave-labour. Finally, this worshipful society threatens to "organize anti-slavery societies in every city, town, and village of the land;" "to send forth agents;" "to circulate unsparingly and extensively anti-slavery tracts and periodicals," advocating and enforcing these wholesome doctrines; to "enlist the pulpit and the press" in the cause; and, finally, to "aim at the purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery."

Surely the most superficial reader cannot but perceive that here is a declaration of war against the entire frame of society as it exists in the United States. Our constitution and laws are no longer binding, for they come in conflict with the law of God. The slaves of the United States are of course absolved from all obligation to obey their masters, and authorized, if not incited, to insurrection, murder, and every species of resistance. The law of God, it seems, in like manner calls upon all just and pious men to assist in robbing our fellow-citizens of a property secured to them by the provisions of the constitution; and, finally, all commercial intercourse is to be discouraged with the people of the South, unless they "instantly" ac-

cede to the moderate and rational demands of these new expounders of the law and the prophets.

In charity, we would willingly believe that the propounders of these extravagances were totally ignorant of their consequences, if carried into practical operation; and it shall therefore be our task, as we consider it our bounden duty to our country, to enlighten them on the subject. They contain the condensed venom of fanaticism, and deserve a critical analysis. Let us see how they operate on religion.

In the first place, the society denounces an institution, sanctioned by the authority of the Supreme Being, from his seat on Mount Sinai, as "before God utterly null and void, being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative, a daring infringement on the law of nature, a base overthrow of the very foundations of the social compact, a complete extinction of all the social relations, endearments, and obligations of mankind, and a presumptuous transgression of the holy commandments; and that, therefore, it ought INSTANTLY to be abrogated."

"And the Lord spake unto Moses on Mount Sinai, saying, Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy

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bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begot in your land ; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bondmen for ever."

Either Moses or the abolitionists must be liars, or the Bible has here given its sanction to an institution "before God utterly null and void ;" "an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative ;" "and a presumptuous transgression of the holy commandments." We turn with unqualified disgust from such blasphemous presumption as is here so dogmatically exhibited by the abolitionists. It might have been hoped that they would stop at this extreme of impious arrogance. They, however, go still farther, and assert, that "all who retain slaves in bondage are man-stealers, according to the Scriptures."

The patriarch Abraham, who signalized his devotion to the will of the Most High by a willing offering of his son Isaac, and who is emphatically called "the friend of God," was, according to the dictum of these expounders of the Scriptures, a "man-stealer," and ought to have suffered death

for the crime. He possessed three hundred and eighteen slaves, for all commentators agree that the word *doulos*, which has been rendered servant, signifies slave. "The word *doulos*," says Dr. Clark, "which we translate servant, means a slave, one who is the entire property of his master." Having already considered the subject of slavery in reference to its opposition to the law of God, we shall content ourselves with these striking examples of the respect of fanaticism for the examples and authority of the Old Testament. In relation to the New, it will appear that they are equally distinguished.

The Saviour of mankind, in propounding that pure, rational, practical, and perfect system of morals and religion under which we live, refrained from all innovation on the civil institutions of the nations to whom he addressed himself. He soared into a higher sphere of obligations and duties, and never meddled with the subject of private rights. His principles are of universal application; and his precepts can never, without the most impudent perversion, be made to sanction violations of private property or public law. It might be well for the abolitionists to remember and respect his example, since it applies directly to the present case. Their proceedings are at war with the civil and social institutions of the

United States, with the laws, and the constitution. They menace the peace of the confederation, and strike at the root of that union which is the basis of public happiness. Above all, they operate most disastrously on the diffusion of Christianity among millions of slaves in the South, by producing a necessity on the part of the master to curtail their opportunities of attending public worship, and to exclude, as far as practicable, all those white preachers who heretofore were permitted to instruct them in the principles of their faith.

That this is now almost universally the case, appears from the letters heretofore introduced to illustrate the social relations between the master and the slave; from the language of all the chief magistrates of the Southern states in their communications to the legislative bodies, enforcing the necessity of new restraints to prevent the contagion of abolition principles, and by a complete exclusion of every means or instrument of instruction, because they have been perverted to the most dangerous purposes. Presentments similar to the following are now frequently seen at the South, and distinctly indicate the state of public feeling:—

“ We, the grand jury, being deeply impressed with the state of things around us, cannot close

our session without reminding all officers of the peace, magistrates and others, of the great necessity that exists, by reason of the combined efforts of the abolition societies of the North, in disseminating their incendiary publications among us, and do most earnestly request of all such officers diligently to enforce the various acts of the legislature passed in reference to free negroes and slaves of the commonwealth; and we do also further urge them hereafter to order out patrols in the different sections of the county, to ensure in these critical times the peace and safety of the good people of the county.

JAMES G. FICKLIN, Foreman.

A copy. Test, J. KEAN, Clerk.

To these may be added the testimony of the candid and intelligent author of "The South West"—Professor Ingraham—who says—

"Negro preaching has obtained here formerly, but the injudicious course taken at the North by those who are friendly to the cause of emancipation, but who do not evince their good feelings in the wisest manner, has led planters to keep a tighter rein upon their slaves. And negro preaching, among the removal of other privileges which they once enjoyed, is now interdicted. It is cer-

tainly to be regretted, that the steps taken by those who desire to do away slavery should have militated against their views, through their own unadvised measures, and placed the subject of their philanthropic efforts in a less desirable state than formerly."

Influenced by a just apprehension of the consequences of the rash and intemperate interference of the abolitionists, and their perservering attempts to instigate the slaves to violence and insurrection, it thus appears that the people of the South are compelled, in self-defence, to close up to them every avenue of religious knowledge, and to adopt all the rigorous measures of a jealous policy. They will no longer wear their chains so lightly as scarce to feel them; they will no longer be permitted the indulgences which ever result from a generous confidence that they will not be abused to bad purposes, nor allowed the freedom of action which was gradually becoming more and more extensive. The free blacks are still greater sufferers by the efforts of their over zealous friends, for it is proposed to repeal almost all the laws conferring on them any of the privileges of freemen. They have become objects of the most rigid and severe scrutiny; and there can be no doubt that the slightest suspicion will draw down on their heads addi-

tional penalties. The master cannot trust his slave—the slave hates his master: on one hand is seen a watchful jealousy, ever the precursor of severity to the dependant; on the other, a spirit of stubborn refractory pride, mingled with one of a still more dangerous and malignant nature. Thus, on the one side confidence, on the other, gratitude and affection, are irretrievably lost. All that contributed to render the relations of master and slave a reciprocity of mutual benefits, and gave the institution of slavery in the South the leading features of the patriarchal state, in which, as the head of the tribe possessed all the property, so was he under the solemn obligation of maintaining and protecting all his dependants; all these will give place to a contest of jealous apprehension and secret revenge. The master will be obliged to act the tyrant in his own defence, and the slave will resort to the only weapons of weakness; deception, fraud, conspiracy, and covert acts of vengeance.

Thus fanaticism, which is the leading influence actuating the proceedings of the abolitionists, is directly at war with the Scriptures, as well as with the progress of religion among the slaves in the South. But this is not all. It takes a wider range of mischief. It is the most fatal enemy of

the great and true principles of religion everywhere and at all times. The excesses committed by its votaries, and the mischiefs which in every age they have brought down on the heads of mankind, under the sanction of religion, are such, that nothing but its being upheld by an Almighty arm, could have prevented the human race from repudiating a faith coming, not in the semblance of a bright celestial influence descending like the dove from heaven with the olive in its grasp and peace nestling under its wings, but rising from the impenetrable darkness of error and delusion like a destroying fiend, smiting the blessings of the earth with blight and mildew, tracking its course with blood and fire, and offering up thousands of hecatombs to the God of mercy and forgiveness. It is this perversion of the most mild, forgiving, and merciful code ever propounded to mankind, that has driven more sheep from the fold of the divine Shepherd, and made more infidels, than the mission of Mohammed, or the progress of free principles, which the supporters of monarchy are pleased to represent as the most dangerous enemies to true religion.

Happily for us, the fanatics cannot as yet resort to the stake and the fagot in this country. It is boasted that the mild and tolerant spirit of this

wonderful age has banished those persecutions which disgraced the earlier periods of Christianity. But, like much of the vapourings of the times, the vaunt is rather unsubstantial. It is true that it is no longer the fashion to pass laws "preventing all diversity in religious opinions,"* nor bring about a conformity, as Procrustes did, in the length of his victims by stretching them on a bed of torture. But the fanatical zealots can and do let slip the spirit of bitter persecution, in the shape of slanderous libels, denouncing whole communities, states, and sections of country, containing millions of people, as "man-stealers and murderers," living in the daily violation of the precepts of humanity and the laws of God. They can and do undermine their happiness ; destroy the security of their domestic fireside ; stimulate their dependants to insurrection and murder ; pervert the precepts of religion to the purposes of defamation, and under the sanction of its name rush into direct opposition to its spirit. Such a course can be called by no other name than persecution, and that of the bitterest kind, equally at war with the attributes of the Supreme Being, as the welfare of his creatures. It brings religion into disrepute, dis-

* Such a law existed in the reign of Henry VIII. of England

gusts the more mild and rational class of believers ; and hence the axiom which all past experience verifies, that "An age of fanaticism is always succeeded by one of unbelief."

Nor is the influence of fanaticism on morals less pernicious. It makes war on the social and moral duties, and erects its own mad theories into a despotic code, equally independent of the behests of the law, and the restraints of reason. With a wild, venomous asperity it persecutes all opposing influences, and denounces everything in the way of its whirlwind career. Reaching with a daring and impious audacity at the high and inscrutable purposes of Heaven, it usurps the sole prerogative of interpreting them to mankind, and of enforcing obedience. If the established principles of morality, justice, or equity stand in its way, it dashes them aside ; if the laws of the land interfere with its dogmas, it denounces them as impious violations of the declared will of Heaven ; if the social institutions offer obstacles to its furious career, they must be ploughed up by the roots and harrowed into atoms. Nothing is too hallowed for its touch, and nothing secure from its daring intrusion.

When it has succeeded in the work of desolation, and stands in the midst of the ruins of society ; when it has prostrated all the great landmarks of

our rights and our duties, it is incapable of substituting anything in their place, but arbitrary interpretations of texts, beatified visions of abstraction engendered by superstition and ignorance, or wilful and pernicious errors. Our duties to God, and our duties to man, are divorced as wide as the poles, and made totally incompatible ; religion and morality, twin sisters in loveliness, descending alike from the skies, walking hand in hand through the world, and blessing mankind, are rudely separated into opposite incongruities, one to be prostituted to fanaticism, the other to find votaries where she may. A mystical, incomprehensible perfectibility, abstract and independent of all practical exemplification, at least in deeds, supersedes the plain and simple lessons of duty which all comprehend ; and instead of riding by the sheet anchor in safety, we are left to drift at random, without rudder, compass, or pilot, at the mercy of the whirlpool and the whirlwind.

Fanaticism is in like manner the most dangerous enemy to all rational, civil, and political freedom. We mean that freedom which is guarantied by the faith of constitutions, and administered through the medium of laws emanating from the people, and therefore challenging their respectful obedience. What has it long been about, and what is it now

doing among the free people of the United States ? Denouncing with senseless violence that constitution which is the great guarantee of their rights and property ; demanding of congress to disregard that sacred compact which knits us together, and prevents the United States from becoming rivals and enemies, instead of members of one great and beneficent confederation, under whose protecting auspices we have distanced even our own hopes, and more than realized the fears of others ; exciting and stimulating millions of ignorant blacks to a war with society itself, by promulgating the pernicious doctrine, that "slavery absolves them from all obligations to mankind," thus realizing the prophecy concerning the children of Ishmael, whose hands were to be against all men, and the hands of all men against them. It sees but one object in the world ; it has but one good ; and whether it be real or imaginary, for that it will sacrifice everything but its own safety, which is too indispensable to the approaching millennium to be placed in jeopardy. See what they say of the charter of our rights, the constitution, and the ark of our safety, the union :—

" We are for union, but not with slavery. We will give the union for the abolition of slavery, if nothing else will gain it ; but if we cannot gain it

at all, then the South is welcome to a dissolution—the sooner the better. The slaveholders may as well understand first as last, that ‘The Union’ may have other uses for *them* than that of a *lash* to shake over the heads of northern freemen.”

Another of these pious incendiaries maintains the right and duty of the slave to cut the throats, or poison, or consume with fire, his master and all his family, if by so doing he can free himself from bondage. A third, in a sermon delivered from the pulpit, calls upon him “in the name of the LIVING God, and of his only Son, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, to assert his freedom by every means;” of course by conspiracy, murder, and indiscriminate massacre. A fourth organ, in the shape of a convention of abolitionists, lays it down as a principle, that “*the condition of slavery absolves us from all the obligations of mankind,*” thus giving the slave the right of a wild beast to prey upon its fellows, and cutting up by the roots the entire social system of the United States. There is no end to these wild and wicked extravagances, which, addressed to enlightened men, would excite no other feeling but indignant contempt; but which, intended as they are to operate upon the feelings of ignorant slaves, are firebrands cast into the harvest field just ready for the reaper.

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The conduct and sentiments of the abolitionists are marked by an utter disregard, a ferocious hostility to those laws and institutions which stand in the way of their mad schemes, and under whose salutary influence the people of the United States exhibit a spectacle of happiness and prosperity without a parallel. In the pretended pursuit of the rights of human beings, they trample on all the feelings of humanity, and immolate the laws of their country on the altar of a wilful misrepresentation of the law of God. Some of their defenders have denied the language that has come forth under the auspices of their own acknowledged organs, and the inferences which have been drawn from their own declarations. But it will not do: we impeach them as enemies of the law of the land, the constitution of the government, the union of the states, the common courtesies of life, the precepts of religion, and the rights and lives of millions of our countrymen. We charge them with using every exertion, straining every nerve, and resorting to every device, open and underhand, to produce, to foster, and to inflame feelings between the master and the slave, the South and the North, that cannot but be productive of consequences as fatal to the happiness of the former, as to the friendly relations and salutary

union of the latter. The proofs are their own declarations, their words and their actions ; and to these we appeal.

Where shall we find barriers to defend us against the consequences of the doctrine, that human laws, sanctioned by an independent people, and sanctified in their happy consequences, may, nay, must be disregarded, on the authority of a text of Scripture, interpreted by fanatics to suit their own purposes ? Where shall we look for security to our rights, or stability to our institutions, if they are thus to be sacrificed to a presumptuous interpretation of the law of God and the rights of nature ? No constitution declaring and defining the principles on which nations choose to repose their rights and liberties ; no laws for restraining wrong or maintaining right ; no institutions, however productive of the general happiness of those who alone had a right to create them, can stand against such a system of daring innovation. Every knot of mad or malignant fanatics, foaming at the mouth with a ferocious abhorrence of the civil institutions of a free people, or writhing with envy at their own innate insignificance, and sighing for notoriety ; every such association may thus overturn the whole fabric of human rights, and destroy all personal liberty, all freedom of action or mind, by the instrumentality

of a text interpreted to suit their purposes, or a dogma which they cannot sustain but by a perversion of the Scriptures.

- This is the way in which the duplicity of cunning has always assailed the credulity of ignorance, and brought it to crouch at its footstool. Such were the systems of government which prevailed among mankind in the darkest ages of the world. They were the sport of priests and oracles, declaring the will of God just as it suited their interests, or as they were swayed by presents of golden tripods, or talents of silver. All civil rights were at the mercy of these arbitrary interpreters of the will of the gods, who one day pronounced one thing contrary to that will, the next day something else, until, at last, mankind retained no rights except what their oracles were pleased to allow them.

- It is thus with the sect of fanatics which has rallied under pretence of vindicating the rights of the slave. Their whole proceedings are in direct hostility to all freedom of person and property ; for if they can find one text of Scripture which renders it imperative on the master "instantly"—as they maintain in their great manifesto—to manumit his slaves, there is no knowing but that in good time they may detect in the dream of Isaiah,

or the Song of Solomon, another, which commands us to restore to the Indians the lands which they once held within the limits of the United States. And what security have we against a law of the Most High, enveloped in the vague obscurity of some inspired mystification, but which may one day be interpreted by these learned commentators into a solemn injunction to restore the kings of Israël and the Jewish hierarchy, under penalty of everlasting condemnation ? There is no mischievous absurdity that may not be imposed upon us, where the code is a text, and its interpreters madmen or impostors.

Fanaticism, when assuming the garb of universal philanthropy, is equally opposed to all patriotism, and all the social relations of life. It has no fireside, no home, no centre. The equal lover of "the entire human race," such as Mr. Garrison and his associates, is in effect a traitor to his country, a bad citizen, a coldhearted friend, a worthless husband, and an unnatural father, if he acts up to his principles. He is false to his native land, to the nearest and dearest ties and duties, moral, social, and political, for he stands ready to sacrifice them all for the benefit of strangers, aliens, and enemies. He will not fight for his

country, for all countries are alike to him ; he will not devote his time, his talents, his labours, and affections to the happiness of his wife, his children, and his household friends, for he equally loves the whole family of mankind; and leaves them to the fostering care of the "entire human race," while he wanders away to the uttermost parts of the earth to overturn the social relations of nations, and establish a universal brotherhood. He scorns the sordid interchange of reciprocal duties, and disinterestedly devotes himself to those who are equally beyond the reach of benefiting by or returning his good offices.

His heart is never at home. The centripetal force never operates on him. He is for ever receding from the centre to the circumference, and his sphere of action is the whole universe. Nothing less than the great human family can awaken his sympathies. Wives, children, relations, friends, and country, are not half so near and dear to him as the negroes of Africa, or the Indians of Polynesia ; and as to all the little insignificant ties and associations that form the cement of families, neighbourhoods, and communities, the solace of human life, they are as burnt flax, scorching, smoking, and finally consuming in the fiery furnace of red-hot

fanaticism. Nothing will content him but the sacrifice of his country to a world or a dogma.

Hence, beyond all question, arises that gradual decay of real piety and practical religion which, notwithstanding all the cant and pretence of the age, cannot but be palpable to every calm observer. We seem to be exporting so much of our zeal and religion to distant countries, that there is scarcely enough left for our own consumption; and like the old woman whom Rhadamanthus beckoned to the left hand, claim the rewards of Heaven, not on the score of our own reformation, but the pains we take to reform others. Such is fanaticism, which, setting itself above the restraints of law, and the supervision of earthly tribunals, arrogates the sanction of Heaven for all its excesses, and is consequently as deaf to argument as it is blind to the dictates of common sense. It neither reasons nor listens to reason. We therefore do not address ourselves to the fanatics, but to the rational, reflecting citizens of the United States, a vast majority of whom are always on the side of their country and their constitution. We shall as little heed their reproaches as we respect their principles, or the course by which they are illustrated. Their sincerity, even if conceded, is no apology for madness. The madman who shot at

the president was unquestionably sincere, yet is now expiating his error by a seclusion from that society of which he was the enemy. It is only persons afflicted with a harmless distortion of the mind that we allow to go at large, and we cannot include the abolitionists among this fortunate class.

It is difficult to discover to what denomination of Christians the clergymen who have taken the lead in this crusade, or given their sanction to the declarations and proceedings of the abolitionists, belong. A convention of the Methodist church of Ohio, one of the most numerous and respectable in the United States, not long since disavowed their proceedings in an admirable report, expressly stating that their discipline recognised and enforced submission to the civil power. A convention of the Presbyterian church of Pennsylvania, which assembled in Philadelphia a few weeks since, in like manner disclaimed all affinity or co-operation. The Baptists, as we are informed, are opposed to their whole course, and have dissented from them; the Episcopal church has given no sanction; and the Catholic is strongly opposed to their dangerous designs.

To what Christian church, then, do these brawling disturbers of the public peace appertain? By what authority, other than a perversion of the Scrip-

tures, do they presume to speak, in their holy calling, in opposition to those numerous and respectable sects, which comprise almost the entire people of the United States? Are they supported by the canons, creed, doctrines, or discipline of any known church? or have they cast away all communion with them, and set up for themselves? Do they affect superior piety or orthodoxy? or have they attained to a greater degree of perfectibility, that places them above the restraint of all religious, as well as of all moral and legal codes? If so, it would seem full time for the humble, old-fashioned followers of the Scriptures to proclaim to the world that they do not aspire to this sublime elevation above the restraints of the law, and the institutions of society, and will no longer be responsible for these daring eccentricities. They will then stand alone in the imbecility of their glory, and may justly lay claim to all the honours of immediate abolition, as well as its twin cherub, amalgamation.

From various notices we have seen of abolition meetings in Boston and elsewhere, it would appear that the abolition societies consist principally of females. If such be really the case, we would take this occasion with all that respectful deference to the sex, which is the distinguishing character-

istic of freemen, gently to remind them that the appropriate sphere of women is their home, and their appropriate duties at the cradle or the fireside. It is there they best fulfil their most high and honourable destiny. It is there they become what they were intended to be, blessings to man and blessed by him. Surely they cannot be aware of the direct inference which must and will be drawn from their support of the disgusting doctrine of amalgamation, namely, that they stand ready and willing to surrender themselves to the embraces of ignorance and barbarity, and to become the mothers of a degraded race of woolly headed mulattoes. If they are sincere in their adhesion to these societies ; if they are willing to carry out their principles, such must be their practice. Gracious heaven ! what a prostitution !

Though Martha was gently reproached by the Saviour for her exclusive attention to domestic occupations, we do not find that Mary, though praised for her pious devotion, ever so far forgot the delicacy of her sex, or the timidity of a virgin, as to become the dupe or the instrument of false prophets and impudent impostors ; or that she abetted conspiracies against the dignity of woman and the peace of society. Nothing is said of her assuming

the character of a man ; exposing herself to insults and violence in order to become the protector of a thief pardoned, not like him on the cross by the Saviour of mankind, but by a worldly master. Still less did we ever hear of her contributing her money and her influence in furtherance of a conspiracy to debase the race to which she belonged, and scatter the land of her birth into contending atoms. She never became the disciple of a Matthias, or the follower of a Thompson.

Her example cannot therefore be pleaded in justification of a neglect of female duties, nor a degradation of the female character. Still less does it sanction the women of the United States in their co-operation with impostors and fugitives from crime in a war against the civil institutions of their country. Neither is it by thus becoming the dupes of ignorant or mischievous deluders, that they can find respectability and happiness, or administer to that of the other sex. It is not at midnight meetings of conspirators against the repose and integrity of the United States ; nor in listening to the brawling declamations of sublimated incendiaries, advocating violations of the laws of man as well as the decorums of woman, that she can qualify herself for the fulfilment of those sacred duties, the performance of which makes

her the guardian angel of the happiness of man ; his protector and mentor in childhood ; his divinity in youth ; his companion and solace in manhood ; his benign and gentle nurse in old age. Thus is she twice his mother ; once in the cradle, and again on the verge of the grave ; and thus while supporting the fabric of man's happiness, she lays the surest basis for her own, in the bosom of HOME.

THE END.

